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Effective administrative strategies for mainstreaming in selected Massachusetts elementary schools.

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EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATIVE STRATEGIES FOR MAINSTREAMING IN SELECTED MASSACHUSETTS ELEMENTARY SCHOOOLS

A Dissertation Presented

by

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ABSTRACT

EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATIVE STRATEGIES FOR MAINSTREAMING
IN SELECTED MASSACHUSETTS ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

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For over a decade, federal and state laws have mandated a free and appropriate education for special needs students in the least-restricted environment. There has been a wide variation of progress made in this area, depending on the approach taken by the administration of the school district, and the degree of support between staff (both regular and special education staff), parents and administrators.

The purpose of this study was to obtain suggestions from five Massachusetts Public School systems that focus on effective administrative strategies for mainstreaming on the elementary school level. Data was gathered from a review of literature, as well as a questionnaire, containing both questions to answer, and statements with which the participant was asked to either agree or disagree. A total of 25

Questionnaires were sent to five members of each of five Massachusetts school districts. Only three out of the five schools responded to the questionnaires. Further information was derived from tape-recorded interviews with school administrators.

By examining actual case study accounts and various national model programs for mainstreaming, other ideas have been suggested and are included in the study.

The success of a mainstreaming program lies in the relationship between administrators, staff, and parents. The key ingredient is unlimited involvement at the administrative level, and the ability to develop effective techniques for enhancing integration. In order to succeed in the development of an effective mainstreamed program, it is critical that administrators:

--Need to encourage and improve interaction between regular and special education staff members.

--Try to identify negative attitudes and work toward improving attitude problems.

--If possible, involve staff in the development of the model, as well as the ultimate implementation of the program.

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INTRODUCTION

Our nation's history is characterized by successive battles to gain freedom and equality for all inhabitants whatever their color, social status, or physical impediment. Secure civil rights and liberties are the constitutional privilege of everyone. However, this promise is still being sought by a wide variety of groups. For example, Blacks, Indians, Hispanic, Asians, woman, the poor and the handicapped continue the struggle against prejudiced views and strict laws which limit their progress. For each of these groups, successful integration into the mainstream of society remains elusive.

Administrators and policy makers have the appropriate power to influence the school system, and to integrate mildly handicapped children into regular education classroom. This is a necessary precondition to insuring equal educational opportunities for all children.

The 1974 passage of PL 94-142, called Chapter 766, has had a profound effect on American schools. Since the implementation of the law there has been evolutionary change process, upgrading the availability of special education services. Congress later added to

the rights guaranteed by Chapter 766, passing the Education For All Handicapped Children Act, which mandated integration to the maximum extent possible. In focusing on the immediate requirements of students with special needs and their subsequent, successful integration, the law recognized that one of the critical elements is their right to a free, appropriate education alongside their non-handicapped peers. The legislation also outlines innovative requirements for parental involvement and procedural protection.

A decade later, our concerns continue as the need for policy and procedure changes remains, in order to maximize the potential growth of all handicapped citizens. The interest of this researcher has been focused primarily on the administrator's approach to mainstreaming the integration of the mildly handicapped population. Administrators in both regular and special education directly influence situations, such as the elimination of some substantially separate education classes. Specifically, the author will document a study that focuses on suggested administrative approaches to mainstreaming, and their effects on students, staff and the community involved in our educational system.

Problem Statement

More than a decade has passed since the implementation of Chapter 766, which revolutionized the manner in which Massachusetts public schools are required to provide education for students with special needs. However, documents reveal that, contrary to the intent of the legislation, students are still being placed in substantially separate programs, and are not being allowed to benefit from mainstreaming, as was intended by the law (Massachusetts Advocacy Center, 1987).

The Massachusetts Advocacy Center Report 1987, p. 3) indicates that "when schools fail to educate disabled students in the mainstream, as required by law, all children are deprived of the opportunity to participate as equals in society."

By closely examining elementary schools in the state of Massachusetts, the researcher hopes to develop suggestions for a workable solution to this situation. The problem statement raises a number of related questions.

1. Do administrators view mainstreaming as an important goal of their school systems?

2. What significant problems have administrators encountered in implementing a mainstreaming program?

3. Was it a voluntary or mandatory decision?

4. Was the staff cooperative in planning an integrated program?

5. If negative attitudes were present, how did administrators attempt to alter such attitudes?

6. Where negative attitudes were present, did more opposition come from regular or special education staff members?

7. What role have parents played, in regard to the mainstreaming of their children?

8. Are administrators being financially supported to encourage mainstreaming by the state of Massachusetts?

9. Have administrators experienced any difficulties in recruiting professionals skilled and licensed professionals?

10. What specific types of support and strategies for mainstreaming would administrators recommend?

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to identify specific problems and effective administrative strategies for the integration of mildly handicapped students into regular education in selected Massachusetts elementary schools. In this action research study, I have focused on the suggestions provided to me by administrators in

the three Massachusetts Public Schools who were surveyed and interviewed.

Significance of Study

This study is important because it aims to develop an effective approach to mainstreaming, which administrators can follow. Thus its significance relates back to the importance of mainstreaming. Why is mainstreaming important? "Integrated education is the first, most crucial step toward the ultimate goal of full integration into every aspect of society. It is a key factor in the provision of equal educational opportunity for disabled youth" (Massachusetts Advocacy Center, 1987, p. 4).

When handicapped youngsters are separated from participation with their non-disabled peers, they are more likely to feel stigmatized. When special education classes are "tucked away" in the corner of the school basement, students are inclined to feel isolated. Feelings of stigmatization and isolation can lead to poor self-esteem--exactly what educators want to avoid.

By placing a child with special needs into a segregated program, we are restricting the development of that child. Segregated programs are limited in their ability to prepare students for their future, as

part of an integrated society. "The best way for a disabled student to learn the skills necessary to succeed in the integration as an adult is to participate in the mainstream as a child" (Massachusetts Advocacy Center, p. 5)

Moreover, it is important to abide by the laws of our community. Clear violations of the law (P.L. 94-142, Chapter 766 in Massachusetts), include placing all special education classes in one part of a school building or excluding disabled children from a school because the building is physically inaccessible to disabled students.

Importance of the Study

Since law P.L. 94-142 was passed in 1974, a new area in the field of education was created, which has thus become important as an area for educational research. Equal educational opportunity, as of today, under P.L. 94-142, is not a national requirement for pre school children in public education (Biklen, 1985, p. 117). We are still experiencing lack of motivation for school age youth, who drop out or are "pushed out" of the mainstream in public education (Biklen, 1985, p. 118). Research indicates that this section of the law has not been successfully carried out in a sizable portion of the nation's public school systems. In

Massachusetts, (Public Law 99-457), was passed in October 1987; it states that public schools are responsible for compliance by the school year 1990-1991. Non-compliance will result in the withholding of federal funds. Clearly this issue is of importance for school administrators who depend on federal funds.

Research Hypothesis

The overall success of a mainstreaming program lies in the relationship between administrators, staff, and parents. The key ingredient is unlimited involvement at the administrative level, and the ability to develop effective techniques for enhancing integration. In order to succeed in the development of an effective mainstreamed program, it is critical that administrators:

1. Encourage and improve interaction between regular and special education staff members;
2. Identify negative attitudes and work toward improving attitude problems; and
3. Involve staff in the development of the model, as well as the ultimate implementation of the program.

Definition of Terms

To assist the reader in understanding terms which may be unfamiliar, the following list is provided.

1. Mainstreaming: The term mainstreaming has various interpretations, often depending on the situation involved. In the classroom, mainstreaming facilitates tailoring of treatment to individual needs rather than a system for sorting out children so they will fit conditions designed according to group standards not necessarily suitable for the particular case. (Deno, 1970, p. 37). According to Spodek, "mainstreaming means helping young people with handicaps live, learn, and work in everyday settings where they will have the greatest opportunity to become as independent as possible" (p. 39).
2. Administrator of Special Education: This individual is in charge of all special education programs and services in any given school system. Specific requirements and duties are explained within the guidelines of Chapter 766.

3. Special Needs Child: A child who is unable to progress effectively in a regular education program and requires special education, because of temporary or more permanent adjustment difficulties or attributes arising from intellectual, sensory, emotional or physical factors, cerebral dysfunctions, perceptual factors, or other specific learning impairments, or any combination thereof. (Chapter 766, 1972, p. 40).
4. Chapter 766: This is the chapter number of the state legislation, put into effect by the State Legislature of Massachusetts, on September 1, 1974. This law guarantees a free and appropriate education to children with special needs, who are between 3 and 22 years old, without a high school diploma or its equivalent.
5. Public Law (Public Law) 94-142: Similar to Chapter 766, this is the federal law passed by the United States congress in 1975, which became effective on October 1, 1977. Entitled Education for All Handicapped Children, this piece of legislation insures all children ages 3-22 that they are entitled to a free and appropriate education.

6. Least Restrictive Environment: This refers to "the program that, to the maximum extent appropriate, allows a child to be educated with children who are not in need of special education." (Chapter 766; 1972, p. 229)
7. Individualized Education Plan (I.E.P.): This plan is prepared by the school's evaluation team, and describes any special needs a child has, and outlines the educational programs and services available to meet those needs.
8. Mildly Handicapped Child: Any child requiring special education, who exhibits learning disabilities due to mild emotional difficulties, diminished cognitive skills, low IQ, or moderate developmental delays, but is mentally capable of learning.
9. Public School Regular Education Faculty: A building under the supervision of a school committee, in which more than seventy percent of the children educated therein are children without need of special education (Chapter 766 Regulations, Massachusetts Department of Education, September, 1986).

Overview of Study

To achieve the major purpose of the current study, the next chapter contains a review of related literature. Chapter III includes the research design for gathering further data from 14 administrators in Massachusetts districts which have a record of success in mainstreaming. In Chapter IV results are presented and discussed. The final chapter summarizes and discusses the implications of the study.

Limitations of the Study

There were specific limitations of this study which prevent it from being applicable to school systems worldwide. First, only some of the administrators employed in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts received questionnaires and were surveyed. Second, suggestions offered here are from administrators who felt their approach to special needs problems has been met with positive results, but their suggestions may or may not be applied successfully elsewhere. Third, this study is limited because time could not be allowed for observation of regular education teachers and special educators working together

C H A P T E R II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The literature review will begin with information on the background and history of mainstreaming. It will then examine a number of issues relevant to this study. These are: 1) situations that show when and how an integrated program will benefit mildly handicapped children; 2) the financial barriers toward integration, focusing on the problems faced by schools in Massachusetts; 3) an effective approach for administrators; 4) how a teacher's attitude can affect the future of the education of special education students; 5) the parents' perspective on mainstreaming; 6) two case studies demonstrating ineffective approaches to mainstreaming; 7) special concerns about integrated programs faced by administrators; 8) factors that discourage mainstreaming--financial and other; and 9) various model programs and effective strategies that have been derived from them. The review creates a context in which the researcher developed a questionnaire for administrators and is also used to draw some preliminary conclusions about effective administrative approaches to mainstreaming.

Historical Context

The U.S. Commissioner of Education, Terrell Bell, stated that "Congress became a super school board," in 1975 when it passed legislation creating Public Law 94-142, the Education For All Handicapped Children Act. The Commissioner suggested that the law "went far beyond any other educational measure in dictating the means, not just the ends of education policy" (Weatherly, 1979. p. 11).

When we explore the history that generated this movement, the origin of special education and its need for revisions can be traced back to the 1800's.

> Among the more pervasive philosophical events that shaped special education was one which originated in France, under the direction of Ilard and his student, Sequin. They were committed to a method of training that was based on the principle of sensory stimulation (Weidenman, 1980, p. 3).

Sequin himself credited Jacob Pereire, a Spanish teacher of the deaf and dumb, with the development of the physiological method of sensory training. Furthermore,

> with their primary philosophy based upon the belief that the environment played a major role in shaping ones intelligence, Itard also held that mental deficiency was the result of brain atrophy caused by disuse and lack of stimulation. After the sensationist theory with this case of the "wild boy" failed, he and Sequin established a school for idiots in the Saltpetriere in 1838, based on sensory

> training. By 1846, schools employing the Sequin method of a graduated series of stimuli opened in other European countries including Germany. (Weidenman, 1980, p. 4)

In the United States it was 1833 before the Worcester State Hospital admitted a need to address the condition of "idiots." South Boston established the first experimental school in 1848. The first Benet Simon scales were developed in 1910, and are still used today for classifying the mental age score of students and their I.Q. levels.

Today, the labeling of children continues to cause concern and leads to three separate issues: 1) dissatisfaction with the effectiveness of self-contained classrooms; 2) our dependence on intelligence tests, which may be biased for culturally deprived children; and 3) the psychological effects on the child receiving the label. Administrators who have difficulty with homogeneous groupings of children will question the process of identifying students, who are then segregated from the rest of society.

History has repeated itself since the early 1800's. The research that was conducted in France and applied to the physiological method of training from the environment results in changes that can positively affect the lives of human beings. This research

established the foundation for the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94-142).

Brown v. Board of Education (1954) is cited as the cornerstone for judicial intrusion into the educational setting. "This decision unraveled the 'separate but equal' philosophy of educational service delivery" according to Gartner. The Brown case gave impetus to and served as the foundation for similar cases which challenged school systems in states that denied handicapped children free public education (Gartner & Lipsky, 1987, p. 368).

Parents' rights were challenged by the litigation of two cases: 1) Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children (P.A.R.C.) v. the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (1971) and 2) Mills v. the Board of Education of the District of Columbia (1972). In both cases the plaintiffs argued they were being denied their constitutional rights to a free and appropriate education. The enactment of Public Law 94-142, the Education for all Handicapped Children Act, is a direct result of the P.A.R.C. v. the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania case, and was administered into the form of a federal mandate.

The latter portion of Public Law 94-142 mandates compliance by 1990-1991 or federal funds will be discontinued. The law's major provisions are for

mainstreaming in a Head Start setting; they stress the importance of interagency collaboration which maximizes the use of existing resources for handicapped children and their families.

The performance standards of 94-142 mandate that school systems:

-identify handicapped children or "child find";
-evaluate students through the services of qualified professionals;
-develop an Individual Education Program (I.E.P.);
-provide a variety of preschool programs;
-provide related supportive services;
-provide appropriate services at no cost to families;
-provide service in the least restrictive environment;
-assure parents of their involvement in the process;
-assure confidentiality of records; and
-provide parents due process decision about their child's program. (766 Regulations, September 1986)

What Mainstreaming Means

The term mainstreaming was conceived in the United States in 1962. Maynard Reynolds, a professor of special education, called for a "continuum of placements for children with handicaps" (Biklen, 1985, p. 26). This statement laid the foundation and the first concept of mainstreaming took form. This development came about during a period when segregated schools were being looked upon as unjust and unnecessary. A similar approach, known as "normalization," was emerging in Scandinavia. Some Americans regard mainstreaming as the educational equivalent of normalization.

Three years prior to Reynolds's publication of his article on mainstreaming, Bank-Mikkelsen, a Dane, coined the term "normalization"; with that word "he characterized the policy of permitting people with disabilities opportunities to live in as normal a fashion as possible" (Biklen, 1985, p. 6). Another Scandinavian, Bengt Nirje, later defined normalization as "making available to the mentally retarded patterns and conditions of everyday life which are as close as possible to the norms and patterns of the mainstream of society." Hence the groundwork was developed, from which American educators were able to apply the

principle of normalization to education in the United States.

One school system which chose to act upon the newly developed concept of mainstreaming is located in Hastings, Minnesota, a rural area southeast of Minneapolis. Described as a "sound educational program with extensive mainstreaming," (Hughes & Hurth, 1985, p. 11) the Hastings Public School District first began mainstreaming handicapped children during the early 1960's. Reflecting a positive mental health attitude in every aspect, the program stands out as a model. The following memo issued by the superintendent in 1971 illustrates the strong commitment held by the school system:

> Years ago integration of special education students into regular classes for portions of their school day was done in our system, but then state recommendations seemed to frown on this philosophy. Now there is much talk about his 'integration innovation' as though it is a new concept. I want principals and all teachers to know I feel this integration should again be initiated after careful preparation among the parents, regular classroom teachers, principals, and special education teachers. . . I remember how successful it was for the students years ago, and hope it can be just as successful now. (Hughes & Hurth, 1985, p. 11)

When questioned about their goals for their students, many teachers of special education have emphasized "helping the students learn how to cope with community life" (Biklen, Bogdan, & Searl, 1985,

p. 14). Both regular and special education teachers describe the successful adjustment to life within their community as a critical goal for disabled students. Other goals include fostering their independence,

> Competing in the work force, overcoming their limitations, and, most importantly, being able to achieve their true potential. This notion of potential, or overcoming limits, surfaces again and again as an important justification for mainstreaming. (Biklen, Bogdan, & Searl, 1985, p. 17).

One thing that often blocks potential is stigma. "Disability, like certain other personal qualities [for example, race, place of birth, political allegiance] may be so negatively valued that to have a disability means being defined by that single attribute and, thus, devalued as a person" (Biklen, Bogdan, & Searl, 1985, p. 23). It is through society and individuals that stigma is fabricated. "More importantly, it is learned behavior which can be changed. Research suggests that the single most effective way of combating stigma is through planned personal interaction of those who traditionally give stigma and those who are its recipients" (Biklen, Bogdan & Searl, 1985, p. 11). Bilken, 1985, comments that "Only by bringing young people, disabled and non-disabled alike, together more frequently will we begin to rid ourselves of stereotypes. That is one of the principal benefits of

integration." Students are allowed to learn the ways in which they are alike, and dissimilar, and view each other's strengths and weaknesses. Segregation can only promote further stereotyping. Mainstreaming abandons limits and enhances potential.

Administrative Acknowledgement and Support

Federal funding, as mandated by Public Law 94-142, has revitalized the educational process for the handicapped; however, not all school systems have reorganized their classrooms to focus on the "least restrictive environment" provision, designed to foster optimum personal and social development of students by mainstreaming those with special needs. In order to implement full compliance, Weatherly suggests that any misunderstanding of the intent of the law must be clarified by the following:

1. An understanding must be reached, specifying that 'dumping' of handicapped children back into regular classrooms will not take place without adequate support from special educators and other school-based personnel.

2. It is agreed that in-service training and preparation among school personnel relevant to their changing roles and responsibilities be structured. The new special education law essentially requires schools to add activities and adjust their behavior and response to children with special education needs, (Weatherly, 1979, p. 114).

Since 1978, planning grants have been awarded to approximately 140 colleges and universities. They aim to support faculty involved in the training of school personnel, and to redesign their preparation programs in accord with the principles of Public Law 94-142 (Grosenick & Reynolds, 1981, p. 13).

When the Commission on Excellence issued its report to the nation (Wills, 1985, p. 411), the Assistant Secretary for the Office of Special Education stated that the administrators' initial practice would involve charting a new course to enable them to correct the mistakes of the past (Wills, 1985). Over the past two decades there has been a proliferation of legislation and federally funded "special compensatory and remedial" education programs, designed to motivate all American students, and make achievements in academic growth possible for them.

Since the passage of Public Law 94-142, a significant contribution has been made in structuring the nation's educational system, regarding the needs of handicapped students. According to M. C. Wills (1985), educators have:

1. Redefined the concept and practice of individualized instruction;
2. Redefined the role of parents in the education of their children;

3. Made education possible for one-half million previously unserved, severely handicapped children; and

4. Improved services for several million others.

Although over the last ten years significant contributions have been made toward attaining the "least restricted environment," the Commission of Excellence report indicates that most schools educate students with special learning problems by pulling them out from regular classes. In many instances, barriers have been created which prevent their successful education. The "pull-out" approach is the predominant strategy for structuring programs to improve the educational attainment of students with special learning needs.

The "pull-out" approach often causes serious repercussions. "It has led to discontinuity and interruptions in instruction for teachers and students, loss of control by school leadership on the district level and local level, and the fostering of narrow categorical attitudes and instructional programming" (Wang & Reynolds, 1983, p. 6).

Effective Approaches for Mainstreaming Students

According to Wittschen "a child knows when he has been accepted". . . To illustrate this point, Wittschen gives the example of a teacher who was assigned a hearing impaired student, and wondered how she and the other students would communicate. The principal had assured her of the administration's full support. This teacher paved the way for Andrew's mainstreaming into her regular education class in several ways. First, she showed her class a film without sound. Second, she asked the students for a brief written summary of the movie. Third, she noted that the 35 students had 15 different interpretations.

After viewing the film again with sound, this teacher held a discussion with her class, focusing on the problems faced by those who cannot hear. A week later Andrew began his regular classroom education; the principal introduced the children and assigned him a buddy. Andrew could read lips to understand others, but his oral communication was ineffective. Within two weeks, however, the teacher enrolled in sign language class and, with Andrew's assistance, began teaching the class sign language--this experience became a success story for all those involved (Wittschen, 1981, p. 10).

One program that a public school administrator could use as a cost-effective plan for mainstreaming is the Adaptive Learning Environment (ALEM). Wang (1974) began her work using direct individual observation with students with diverse learning characteristics and delays. They were learning disabled, visually impaired and gifted children. Wang's theory of restructuring education programs has developed into the Adaptive Learning Environment Model, which included both special and regular students. ALEM is a model that could be considered in financial planning as an effective approach to mainstreaming. The ALEM program is used in over 150 school sites within 28 states.

Glasser (1977, p. 39) describes the ALEM procedure as:

> . . . large political variables, allocation and efficient use of teachers' and students' time, structure of classroom management; teacher feedback and reinforcement to students; quality and pattern of teacher/student interactions, relationship between the diagnosed learning, needs of the student and the nature of instructional intervention.

The next component of ALEM is a more open-ended, exploratory learning element, promoting social and personal development as students plan and manage their own learning. By developing the students' self-confidence, teachers are able to spend more time instructing than managing students.

Another effective method from ALEM is the assessment for adaptive instruction which includes the following components:

1. creating and mainstreaming instructional materials;
2. record keeping;
3. diagnostic testing;
4. prescribing, monitoring and diagnosing, and
5. interactive teaching instruction.

Wang and Birch (1984, p. 39) describe four dimensions for implementation of this program:

1. arranging settings and facilitation;
2. developing communication procedures;
3. supervising aides; and
4. increasing student selfresponsibility.

The data collected was found to be effective in over 150 school systems, according to Wang and Birch, not only in mainstreaming programs but in regular educational settings, resulting in consistently higher achievement scores, from 1980 to 1981.

Parental Involvement

In addition to the support of administrators and teachers, involvement of the parents is a key to a successful mainstreaming program. The parent's perspective is often unlike that of a teacher or

administrator. It is equally valid, and should be seen that way.

Parents of students with disabilities want essentially the same kinds of things from schools that parents of non-disabled students expect. These include access, continuity, the right to participate in organizations and activities, open dialogue, and a spirit of cooperation (Biklen, Bogdan & Searl, 1985, p. 172).

Parent Advisory Councils (PACs) are a good way for parents to become involved in their schools' programs for disabled students. Chapter 766 regulations require school districts in Massachusetts to form these councils, including parents of children with special needs. The school district involves PAC members in the development and review of its annual program plan (Massachusetts Department of Education, 1987, p. 19). Several activities have resulted from local Parent Advisory Councils. For example, Somerville sponsored a series of films and group discussions for parents; Westfield started a "Living Skills" course for mildly retarded high school students; and Medford prepared a parent resource booklet and established a "parent support line" that includes a tape recorded message about the 766 evaluation process.

These school-parent programs have proven quite beneficial.

> Programs for developing an atmosphere in the home, which is conducive to academic achievement, [have] been found to increase supervised homework; encourage parent-child conversations about school and everyday events; encourage reading; reduce non-productive television viewing; and have an outstanding record of success in promoting achievement (Will, 1986, p. 414).

Nationwide, parents play a critical role in the development of their children's Individual Education Plan (IEPs). They must be informed of and should agree to all actions concerning their child, including referral; if they disagree with the IEP, an appeals procedure is mandatory. In Massachusetts, when a parent rejects all or part of an IEP, the school sends a copy of the rejection to the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA). Within five days, the Bureau communicates with the parent in writing, advising him/her of a range of rights. These are as follows.

He/she may have mediation or request a hearing, arranged by the Bureau and convenient for the parent, within 20 days. He/she may bring along an advocate, attorney, and/or friend, as well as witnesses and written information and has the right to a copy of all school records, concerning the child, including medical information. The Bureau will then issue a written decision to the parent and the school.

A parent can request that the child be placed in a regular education program, without carrying the process any further. However, if the parent wishes a special education program different from that recommended by the Bureau, they can appeal the decision to the State Advisory Commission for Special Education (SAC), an organization composed of parents and special education professionals, and may then appeal to the State Superior or Federal Court or even to the State or Federal Court (Massachusetts Department of Education, 1987, pp. 15-16).

What parents want is relatively simple:

> . . .equal treatment for their children. More specifically, this means: the right to public education; continuity in their child's schooling process; their children's acceptance as "regular" members of the school; the freedom to participate in school events and activities; an attitude that sees their children as individuals, not as stereotypes of 'the disabled,' and as assets, not burdens; open dialogue; a "shared commitment" to rooting out prejudice; an informed school, on issues concerning special needs students; and a relationship of cooperation between parents and schools (Biklen, 1985, pp. 156-157).

Unfortunately, parents and teachers do not always get along. Teachers may complain that parents do not want to become involved, while parents may feel they are simply forgotten--not valued, left out of decision-making. Is conflict inevitable? Some teachers and parents have found a way to mend their conflicting ways. In schools where parent involvement

has been successful, certain conditions related to parent participation seem always to be present:

-It is school policy to promote parent involvement;

-There is a range of involvement from the informal (phone calls, parent help on field trips) to the formal (involvement in IEPs and organizations).

-Teachers talk to parents about student abilities, needs, and difficulties.

-Teachers and parents can communicate through an ongoing system.

-Parents are involved in planning new programs, and in decision-making within the school.

-Parents can use school facilities for meetings.

-Parents are involved.

-Parents are given specific, clear information regarding student and parent rights.

-Parents and teachers combine efforts at community education to integrate disabled students.

-"Old-timer" parents are encouraged to help "up-and coming" parents.

-Educational information is available to parents (magazines, books, and newsletters). (Biklen, 1985, pp. 157-159)

One well-known statewide effort to teach disabled youth calls parents "co-teachers." In this program,

parents are invited to observe teachers and other professionals as they work with the children. Parents then use what they have learned. Some training episodes are videotaped, allowing parents to view themselves as teachers. These successful parent-training sessions take place at school, in a diagnostic center, or in the home (Biklen, 1985, p. 162).

Most parents of the disabled have found they will have to advocate for their child to get a quality mainstreaming program. They will also have to negotiate. But they can develop a negotiating plan if they establish goals and remain informed. They must also follow up on negotiations, and publicize them (Biklen, 1985, pp. 166-170).

Clearly, parents and teachers can learn from each other, if they are willing to work together harmoniously.

Financial Obstacles to Mainstreaming

In general, the funding of education has been the responsibility of the state and the local community. History has demonstrated that the only way to treat children equally is to disperse funds unequally in order to meet children's diverse needs.

Examined from a financial perspective, integration is indeed cost-effective. Special needs children placed in regular education programs do not require additional expenditures on the part of the school system. In fact in many cases, the provision of mainstreamed programs system-wide has resulted in significant financial savings. Why, then, are so many school systems hesitant to provide more mainstreamed programs? The Massachusetts Advocacy Center's 1987 report focuses in part on this issue. "The Center's analysis revealed that the Massachusetts Department of Education has failed to consider whether certain aspects of the finance system actually discourage integration. The Department has not developed ways to devise financial incentives which would encourage mainstreaming" (Massachusetts Advocacy Center, 1987, p. 35).

Sometimes a town may not grasp the idea that savings result from mainstreaming until the schools are integrated system-wide. The cost-effectiveness may not be readily apparent, when a school system integrates only a selected few individuals. Although mainstreaming may eventually cut down on the expenditures for special needs programs, a special education department may view the move as threatening, if resources are used to accommodate disabled students

in regular classrooms. "Fear of reductions in special education budget, staff, and administrative control can act as a barrier to mainstreaming" (Massachusetts Advocacy Center, 1987, p. 37).

Additional students in a classroom do not necessarily add to the cost of running the program. In Massachusetts, eight special needs students are allowed in one classroom with one teacher. If a school has five students in a class, three additional students could be included at no extra cost, thus discouraging administration progress towards mainstreaming. Segregated programs do appear less costly, but it must be stressed that this is only true if carried out for a short time.

Many towns believe it will curb expenses to transport students outside the system to collaborative programs. There is not sufficient data available to support this claim. Transportation alone, according to the Senate Committee on Post Audit and Oversight, for students placed in collaboratives, can cost as much as or more than tuition (Massachusetts Advocacy Center, 1987, p. 41).

Another barrier which accounts for the trend toward segregation in Massachusetts involves the formula used for state funding. Each town's state aid is based on the number of students in each type of

education program (regular, transitional bilingual, and special education). Because the formula used perceives that special education is more costly than regular education, use of the state aid formula results in larger numbers of students in special education programs receiving more aid. To elaborate further, one must understand the state aid formula, which is based on a system of pupil weights.

> The weight for a regular education student is 1.0 full-time equivalent, and the weight for any special needs student is 4.0 full-time equivalents. The pupil weight and the amount of time spent in special education programs are used to determine the number of full-time equivalent special education students in a school system.
>
> The total number of full-time equivalent weighted pupils is then applied to determine the amount of state aid (Massachusetts Advocacy Center, 1987, p. 42).

The full-time equivalent of a student who is mainstreamed (if he/she does not receive special education services in the mainstream) is lower than the full-time equivalent of the segregated individual in a special classroom. For this reason, the full-time-equivalent determination directly discourages mainstreaming in Massachusetts schools today. From a purely financial point of view, school systems actually benefit from isolating pupils in the segregated classroom for the entire school day.

To illustrate this point, the Massachusetts Advocacy Center gives the following example.

> The full time equivalent of a student who is integrated the maximum 40% of the day is 2.8 (40% of the day x 1.0 [weight of regular education student]) + (60% of the day x 4.0 [weight of special education student]) = 2.8 full-time equivalent.
>
> The full-time equivalent of a student who is never mainstreamed is 4.0% (0% of the day x 1.0 [weight of regular education]) + (100% of the day x 4.0 weight of special education student]) = 4.0 full time equivalent. (Massachusetts Advocacy Center, 1987)

Thus the Massachusetts Advocacy Center provides conclusive evidence that it is "financially advantageous to segregate special needs students" (1987, p. 43).

Placing students in special needs classrooms operated by collaboratives is also more costly than mainstreaming. Often collaboratives charge the sending school a specified rate regardless of the time the student spends in its regular classrooms. If the student is mainstreamed there is no reduction in cost. Also, the weighted full-time equivalent used to calculate state aid for the sending school drops when a student is mainstreamed (Massachusetts Advocacy Center, 1987, p. 40).

The state of Massachusetts faces another barrier toward mainstreaming, in the area of funding for students in private residential schools. The state

pays 60 percent of the cost of these schools. They are not only the most expensive; they also offer the most restrictive environment. Beginning in the 1986-1987 school year, Massachusetts designated its 60 percent share of costs directly to the private school, allowing the town to pay for the remaining 40 percent. Analyzing this formula, one finds that towns save money when they serve pupils in private, residential programs, rather than in less restrictive private day schools. According to the Bureau of Data Collection and Processing, "The statewide annual transportation costs for a student attending a private residential school are $695, compared to $1,798 for a student attending a private day school." Based on these costs, a town saves an additional $1,103 by placing a child in the more segregated residential program. This was calculated as follows:

> $1,798 (town's transportation costs for student attending private day school) - $695 (town's transportation costs for student attending residential school) = $1,103.

According to the Massachusetts Advocacy Center, on the average, a school committee can save $2,342 by educating a student in the most restrictive, residential school prototype. This accounts for savings in tuition and transportation costs.

The crisis that Massachusetts faces today--one that virtually necessitates cutting all regular school programs, in order to afford the required costs of special education--must be addressed by advocates and other supporters. Only then will they be able to formulate solutions, which will not hinder the great strides already made in the education of children with special needs.

According to the Massachusetts Advocacy Center, the following factors have contributed to the crisis that we face today:

> --Special education services have been interpreted to mean 'maximum feasible benefit,' not just 'the best we can do'--an interpretation that will be enforced by the courts if necessary.

These services tend to be more costly than regular education programs, even with a higher state reimbursement. School budgets, even with the additional funding received in the aftermath of the 'school reform' movement of the past few years, have not recovered from the caps imposed by Proposition 2 1/2.

Many educators in today's public school system feel cheated. P.L. 94-142 promised them a generous portion of the costs of special education: as high as 40 percent of the average per pupil cost by 1982. But, the highest percentage attained for the past six years

has been in the vicinity of 12 percent. Due to massive budget cuts, special education is now beginning to feel the impact. Special education teachers feel that since the implementation of P.L. 94-142, state, local, and regional administrators do not have the funds needed for the day-to-day education of these youngsters. The schools are now accountable for the costs which mental health and other agencies carried in the past.

Charles Fields, Executive Secretary of the Indiana Association of Public Schools Superintendents, states that

> P.L. 94-142 has placed us in a financial dilemma. The answer basically is [for federal, state and local policy makers] to carefully try to place a price tag. . . on what a program costs, and to say this program is important enough to fund at this dollar level. School officials should not testify against meeting the needs of special education youngsters. (Weiner, 1985, p. 47)

Other educators voice their concern that because federal funding is needed for the more severely handicapped in residential type settings, small school districts will continue to face more and more money problems, to the extent of schools being on the verge of bankruptcy.

In Texas, small school districts banded together into cooperatives so they could afford more of the various services for handicapped children. For instance, "A cooperative might hire one speech

therapist to serve students from the 11 districts it represents. A school district with 25 handicapped children would have five that need speech therapy, and cannot afford a speech therapist." However, when each of the 11 districts has only one child with a physical handicap, requiring a teacher just for that child, new problems arise. A larger city would have enough of these children to form one class with a teacher and some aides, making it more cost-effective.

Educators are frustrated by the issues schools are now facing. Many suggest that P.L. 94-142 needs to be rewritten, to provide better provisions for custodial and medical care, allowing the schools to focus only on education (Weiner, 1985, p. 56).

Skyrocketing special education costs appear to be diverting funds from regular education programs. These programs, mandated by federal or state government, also need to be adequately funded.

As parents see regular public education programs being affected, they are more likely to remove their children and enroll them in a private school. Perhaps, then, inevitable changes will occur, forcing policy makers to modify P.L. 94-142. It may require re-formulating of the law to allocate additional funding for today's special education students.

Ineffective Mainstreaming: The Children Suffer

The following is an account of a student mainstreamed in a Massachusetts elementary school, whom this researcher knows from personal experience; his name has been changed.

Raymond is a thin male of average height, 4 1/2 years old. He is prescribed medication for asthma. His mother administers his medication twice a day, morning and evening. Raymond is defiant with most adults, unless working one-to-one. At times he is aggressive toward his peers. In the classroom his behavior is generally disruptive, and he rarely wants to join in large-group activities. He is noticeably clumsy in the classroom, bumping into furniture quite often, and does not appear to take proper caution against dangers. When using small blocks, he becomes frustrated easily and requires assistance and encouragement to complete the task. He is, however, capable of completing most puzzles, block buildings or drawings. Although at times he will stutter on his words, he can express his needs, depending on which instructor is present. The day care facility Raymond is attending recommended that he be given a core evaluation, and placed in a special needs classroom for the emotionally disturbed.

The team meeting took place with the evaluation team leader, school psychologist, pupil adjustment council, speech teacher, liaison in the school department, and Raymond's mother, along with the psychologist from the day care center. One person attending the core meeting recommended that Raymond be placed in a regular kindergarten classroom, with no more than 15 youngsters, and be referred to a counseling service for parent and teacher. The other administrators opposed this decision, placing Raymond in a 502.4 substantially separate special education class. Raymond's teacher, who works in the program for the emotionally disturbed, was concerned that he was inappropriately referred for placement in that classroom.

This case illustrates the need for a uniform and structured evaluation process to determine whether a problem exists or if Raymond would have been appropriate for mainstreaming.

As Reynolds and Larkin (Massachusetts Advocacy Center, 1987) pointed out, every indicator suggests that the proportion of children labeled "special needs" is rising, and will continue to rise, over the next several years. One of the key explanations given for this rationale relates to the growing percentage of children living in poverty, which has steadily

increased in recent years. The fertility rate among women at low income levels is higher than that for women at average or higher income levels. Moreover, the rates at which children are being evaluated by teachers for remedial or special education are significantly higher for children in poverty than for children from families with greater economic resources. Thus we face an increase in the numbers of inappropriate referrals for special needs, and funds supporting special education programs.

The Massachusetts Department of Education has begun to sponsor statewide conferences, encouraging effective linkage that would provide greater opportunities for all children, allowing them to be educated in the mainstream environment, and preventing unnecessary referrals to special education programs.

When is Mainstreaming Appropriate?

Not every child can be mainstreamed, but those born with the cognitive ability should have the opportunity to function and develop in a regular classroom setting. Data supporting Katz's (1985) theory of attitude change is lacking, as Horne pointed out:

> The basic assumption. . . is that in order to know how to change attitudes you have to know what type of attitude you are trying to change. This assumption sounds so plausible that it is surprising that more theorists have not been attracted by it. (Horn, 1985, p. 12)

The above statements by Katz could have a profound effect on administrators' opinions regarding the potential for successfully integrating mildly handicapped individuals.

The rule of the "least restrictive environment" was written to facilitate positive interaction among handicapped and non-handicapped pupils. To achieve this goal, however, requires appropriate attitudes toward handicapped students among both professionals and peers; attitudes are often influenced by contact with all children. The research findings indicate that limited training can lead to inadequate acceptance of the handicapped by administrators, classroom teachers, or peers; this may dominate the attitudes that classmates form toward one another (Horne, 1985).

Horne's research also indicates that prior to the 1975 legislation permitting mainstreaming, stereotyped attitudes toward the handicapped students in our society were well established, and may not be easily modified. Thus it can be seen that simply placing handicapped students in regular classrooms will not

necessarily lead to a more positive attitude among peers or teachers.

There are many unanswered questions pertaining to the various responses of teachers or peers toward mainstreaming, and in comparing their attitudes. Most research has focused on mildly developmentally delayed students, but we continue to spotlight teachers' attitudes, since they appear to be influenced by the availability of support from the administrator, previous training and experiences, or their personal education philosophies.

Horne's (1985) findings show that all faculty must recognize the urgent need for competence and positive attitudes, if the mainstreaming of today's children is to succeed someday. In Horne's study, professors ranked attitude as the most important factor for success, while teachers ranked it third. Both the professors and the teachers agreed that they must be sensitive to the handicapped student's self-attitude. Horne also questioned the procedures used to implement attitude modifications. One of the major barriers to successful mainstreaming is the attitude among parents of non-handicapped children and their perception of the effects the handicapped children will have on their childrens' academic achievements.

A Teacher's Attitude

The following incident was witnessed by the researcher within an elementary school in Massachusetts. It exemplifies how a teacher's attitude can affect the placement, and thus the education, a child will receive.

In the teacher's room in this well-run elementary public school sat one male tenured teacher and one female non-tenured teacher. On May 16th they had received their list of fifth-grade students for the upcoming September. While scanning the list, Jack, the male teacher, spotted the name Paul Stevens. He asked why the principal would take Paul out of the 4.5 program, where he had been placed since early childhood, and why the evaluation team, which had recently held a re-evaluation, recommended that he be mainstreamed into regular education. He learned that this decision had been arrived at, based on the Supportive Academic Remedication (SAR) classroom teacher's education plans, along with feedback from the psychologist, parents, and advisors who had attended the core evaluation.

This SAR teacher had close contact with parents and outside counseling services, all of whom had agreed to support her request for integrated placement. The evaluation team had followed the requests of the mother

and teacher and requested that outside counseling continue. Jack added that he was acquainted with the family, as three other family members had been assigned to him, and he had been responsible for each of them being reassigned to special needs classes during the middle part of the school year. His main concern was a lack of understanding on the part of the administration, relative to the problem in the family. He definitely did not want another Stevens child in his classroom.

With all the different theories, most researchers would agree that "attitude is a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manner with respect to a given object" (Horne, 1985). Jack's unfavorable rejection of the name Paul Stevens was a part of a learned attitude toward that family.

An effective administrator could implement a program that would help professionals develop an awareness of the negative behaviors they may be exhibiting toward children and families that are different due to some limitation or disadvantage.

Effective Strategies for Mainstreaming

In reviewing model programs, twelve specific factors have been identified as instrumental to program success. These are:

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In reviewing model programs, twelve specific factors have been identified as instrumental to program success. These are:

1. Tangible community support--Each program was aided by identifiable support within the community, which was reflected in school board actions and policies.

2. A history of mainstreaming--The most successful model programs boasted an extensive history of involvement in mainstreaming, with continuity in policy and personnel.

3. An overall approach or design for implementation--Each approach was practical, optimistic, and oriented to promote mental health, with high expectations of students and administrators.

4. A full array of special service options--Each program had access to a full sequence of special education placement settings.

5. Administrative support for the mainstreaming programs and objectives--It is imperative that the superintendent, principals, and teachers remain knowledgeable and supportive of the program and their role in it.

6. An emphasis on systematic communication--Each program placed a heavy emphasis on communication, especially between special and regular education teachers, and devised systematic procedures to ensure that communication occurred.

7. Defined mental health roles--In each program, designated personnel assumed defined mental health roles and responsibilities.

8. Active parental involvement--Each program involved parents in a variety of ways. Participation ranged from individual student planning to active involvement in program preparation, evaluation, and school governance.

9. Activities to increase understanding and acceptance--All programs used curriculum materials to increase understanding and acceptance of handicapped students among their peers. Strategies included cooperative learning, using affective educational materials, providing experiences to increase awareness and sensitivity, and making use of special curricula, such as "The Kids on the Block," "Kids Come in Special Flavors," and "What's the Difference?" (Horne, 1985)

10. A humanistic approach to provision of support services to teachers and students--The availability of inservice training and other support services was provided in a manner that recognized their importance. Teachers and personnel took an active part in defining problems and developing solutions. In the model programs, personnel remained sensitive to students' needs and feelings--for example, in the transition from one school to another.

11. A favorable financial climate--Most of the programs had adequate financial support (a key deterrent in the proposed success of mainstreaming within the Massachusetts school systems.) Program directors had been successful in obtaining special federal and private funding, and effectively used available federal, state, and local funds. Given the current national economy, some programs foresaw funding cutbacks having uncertain outcomes on their programs. Previous adequate funding was related to community, school board, and school administration support.

12. Coordination with the mental health system--Was also seen as important. Most of the programs developed effective ways of coordinating their services with those of the mental health and related community agencies. Of course, there was a range in the amount of coordination and cooperation some agencies experienced

> comprehensive, integrated involvement while others merely took occasional individual referrals (Hughes & Hurth, 1984, pp. 88-89).

Biklen (1985) suggests additional administrative strategies, which imply critical questions administrators can ask themselves, in preparing to plan a rewarding program for mainstreaming:

1. Ask some of the administrators how others might react to an idea. This makes it possible to tap the administrators' informal advisers outside of the school district.

2. List recent situations that needed decision-making. What were the administrators' positions and motivations?

3. Consider how schools have coped with various other issues. How have they adapted? Concerns related to special education may have been addressed already, such as resources, attitudes, and power.

4. Consider which issues administrators like to work with, and which make them uneasy. There may be room for creativity. One special education administrator, for example, showed how integration could be achieved if they brought the programs back into the system; at the same time they decreased school closings and built more schools.

5. Look at how good administrators motivate and evaluate staff, and reward them for good work. Motivation is the issue, of all administrators, teachers, or parents.

These practices usually take a good deal of time to develop. The administrators must learn why people take the positions they do; ask how different people spend their time; find out what accomplishments they are proud of and what they find least rewarding both in their work and in the school (Biklen, 1985, p. 110).

Model Programs

To run a successful mainstreaming program, administrators must become aware of what other education agencies and schools have done to address the mental health concerns and requirements of students, teachers, and parents. The Hastings, Minnesota Public School District, in compliance with P.L. 94-142, boasts a staff with over 50 positions in special services. These include

> . . .a director of special services, a school psychologist, certified special education teachers, management aides, elementary school social workers, secondary guidance and counseling personnel, and school nurses. . . Aides are assigned to students needing

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individual attention, or to classes in which students use machinery or lab equipment" (Hughes & Hurth, 1985, p. 10).

Special education staff work with special needs students in helping them promote a positive self image, and in settling into the mainstream. Special Lerning and Behavior Problem teachers have stated that a highly important part of their efforts has been the focus on developing and enhancing their students' self-esteem.

For example, one activity at Hastings allowed the special needs students to view a film on learning disabilities. The teachers used small groups to assist students in enhancing social skills. In addition, the resource teachers and regular teachers frequently hold informal meetings that enable them to meet the needs of the handicapped children. Often the principal, counselors, and resource teachers are involved together in helping prepare the regular teachers for the handicapped students.

When Hastings undertook their program for integration, they emphasized interaction between regular and special education staff members. Rules were put into effect to bring together the formerly separate regular and special education entities. For example, administrators substituted periodically for

teachers, enabling them to attend team meetings. Also, members of the administration demonstrated sensitivity by limiting the numbers of disabled students in a teacher's classroom.

The overall success of the Hastings model program lies in its initial development. The superintendent actively lobbied for special education funding, and assumed responsibility for its implementation; for example he was involved as chairperson for child study team meetings. Theorists state that to achieve such effective results in other systems, all administrators must be accessible. Integration is not likely to be successful unless it extends beyond children to involve staff, parents, and administrators (Galloway & Chandler, 1978; Taylor & Ferguson, 1985; Hughes & Harth, 1984, p. 20).

> Administrative commitment to integration and planned strategies for emphasizing commonalities and mutually satisfying interactions can help to overcome divisions (pertaining to barriers in the structure of regular/special education systems). Examples of such strategies include encouraging teachers to function as part of school building teams, and encouraging parents of handicapped students to participate in the building-level parent-teacher organization. (McDonnell & Hardman, 1988, p. 17)

According to Hughes and Hurth (1984), the inservice training program for mainstreaming in the Montgomery County Public Schools, Rockville, Maryland

is extremely comprehensive in terms of the number of schools actively involved. The program reflects respect for teachers, and the responsibilities they are asked to carry out with the mainstreaming movement. School personnel have unique arrangements with parents and involve them integrally in the inservice process.

In Montgomery County, various arrangements for training are offered to interested teachers. Administrators remain flexible as to the choices and amount of training procedures chosen.

> Some available selections include: a) consultations; b) inschool and interschool workshops; c) formal inschool courses [i.e. Teaching Children with Special Needs, Mainstreaming and Individualized Education Programs, and Mainstreaming Students with Visual, Auditory, Speech/Language, and Physical Handicaps; d) seminars or individual study; e) area and county workshops or state and local workshops; f) short-term intensive training; g) Montgomery County Public Schools' Special Education Competency courses; h) University or private courses or institutes; and i) long-term intensified training requiring academic leave. (Hughes & Hurth, 1984, pp. 49-51)

The Kensington Elementary school is part of the Montgomery County public school system. In facilitating their program for mainstreaming, a system was devised whereupon each classroom arranged its reading program to be held during the same class period, enabling uniformity among students moving into separate reading groups. The program involved School Inservice Coordinators for Mainstreaming (SICMs), who

were key to the success of mainstreaming, as well as the principal, faculty, and the area consulting teacher specialist. Students displaying moderate forms of retardation were placed in the mainstream during Music, Art, and Physical Education classes. During homeroom periods teachers used the team-teaching approach. They discovered that team-teaching was effective in promoting a positive mainstreaming experience within their school.

Another Montgomery County elementary school, the Diamond School, had its principal set the tone for mainstreaming. Continuous monitoring of students, maintained by a daily mainstreaming report for each student, is one example of a procedure the administration put into effect.

At the Diamond Elementary School, in Montgomery County, staff members were given opportunities to come together to synchronize their schedules and arrange their programs agreeably. Handicapped students now participate in mainstream gym and science classes, and in such activities as film programs. For more academic classes, these students have been assigned to lower grades with younger pupils.

There are instances, in almost any mainstreaming program, where changes in regular classroom instruction are both necessary and beneficial to the student. For

example, a child might be moved to a front desk for extra attention or allowed to use a calculator for arithmetic (Haber, 1989, p. 167).

In Tacoma, Washington, the progressive inclusion program was presented to the school board during the 1958-1959 school year, making it one of the nation's earliest mainstreaming efforts. Construction of new and larger institutional buildings at that time emphasized the need for barrier-free design.

The board has continued to be an important source of support for progressive inclusion; it supports the needs of handicapped students, and has helped to promote special needs programs.

The term "progressive inclusion" is based on principles of children's mental health and learning.

> From the teacher's perspective, progressive inclusion recognizes reactions ranging from avid acceptance to fear--and thus the need for highly intensified staff development activities. Providing a multiple array of staff development options, progressive inclusion seeks to help teachers move from fear to comfort, from rejection to acceptance, and from hesitation to enthusiasm for working with all children. (Hughes & Hurth, 1984, p. 38)

The social work services in the Tacoma system have also been important in integration. Social work services have helped bridge the gap between parents and teachers, a crucial aspect of successful mainstreaming.

There are several more examples of Tacoma's excellent implementation. For example, Seward Elementary School is one of several in the district. The principal had a faculty meeting room for special education teachers closed off, in order to encourage communication between special and regular education faculty (Hughes & Hurth, 1984, p. 41).

Moreover, one elementary level teacher (grades 3 and 4) includes disabled students in her class to enhance social interaction between students. By including 8 handicapped students for storytime and 4 students for science, she has found her efforts toward integration rewarding. She also encouraged 4 to 8 students to come in for various types of fun programs and activities. She indicated that "the principal's support had increased her acceptance of the program and made her feel more comfortable in participating" (Hughes & Hurth, 1984, p. 41).

Other activities which have resulted in a positive mainstreaming experience for various school systems nationwide include:

1. A materials van, called the Ed-U-Van, a rolling library which circulates materials throughout the school district.

2. A hotline phone-in procedure for parents and special and regular education teachers who have questions, concerns, or needs related to mainstreaming implementation.

3. The establishment of an advisory committee, by administration, for exceptional student education programs. Those serving on the committee represent community agencies, as well as school personnel.

4. An out-of-school support group and a special training program for teachers have been used effectively in a Minneapolis, Minnesota program. (Hughes & Hurth, p. 101)

The Billerica Schools Report (1989, p. 8) lists several other model programs. For instance, a parent volunteer program at First Ward Elementary School in Morgantown, West Virginia, has benefited their mainstreaming program for learning-disabled students. A committee, comprised of a special education teacher, two regular education teachers, and the school librarian was set up to help plan the program with a parent as coordinator. They recruited volunteers from local seniors, parents, and PTA members.

In addition, an excellent resource for designing child-initiated programs is "High Scope's Cognitively-Oriented Curriculum." Consisting of fifty key experiences it is particularly suited to the requirements of a mainstreaming program (Billerica Public Schools, Early Childhood Program Evaluation Report, May 1989, p. 8).

In conclusion, principals have learned to appreciate the benefits of involving teachers and parents, although sharing school governance was difficult at first. As others develop leadership skills, their job becomes more manageable. Instead of being disciplinarians and crisis managers, they have been better able to serve as instructional leaders in their schools.

Summary

The research surveyed here is merely an "eye opening" overview of the research needed to effectively manage mainstreaming in the public elementary schools. Effective administration must bring together the mission of schools with the needs and aspirations of the staff who work there.

Educators in leadership positions should examine their organizations' structure, communication, and accountability measures, as well as other integrative mechanisms that can affect student and parent roles in mainstreaming.

Until administrators and managers of special needs programs provide more regular and specialized staff, to both exceptional and non-exceptional students in the same setting, full time mainstreaming will continue to fail. The Adaptive Learning Environment Model is only

one of many programs that could be implemented in the public schools.

A new strategy in opposition to the "pull-out" approach is needed for a successful education program. Administrators need training process based on the cost effectiveness for mainstreaming, which can prevent the unnecessary labeling and referrals for segregated special schools. The mainstreaming of a given child should not result in a watered-down curriculum for all students.

Many questions remain unanswered, regarding the negative attitudes of parents with children who do not have special needs, or regular classroom teachers who had mainstreaming thrust upon them without consultation. Horne's study (1985) showed that some children required only the services of a specialist. It may be that rankings of severity may make a difference in attitudes toward the handicapped.

It is difficult to say whether the degree of peer perception or the handicapped child's self-concept has a significant role in successful mainstreaming. Research on the attitudes of teachers, parents, children and community certainly indicates a need for intervention, to influence changes and interaction among the exceptional students and their regular classmates.

This educational system, in reality, has not fulfilled the goal of "least restricted environment" as administrators, parent, and teachers, have clearly stated: programs have achieved mixed results, characterized by inappropriate labeling, inappropriate placement and fragmentation, or removal from the regular educational programs.

Mainstreaming can be a positive experience if it is implemented and administered correctly. If teachers feel supported, they will perceive mainstreaming as a challenge and not as a burden. They can then serve as role models to ensure that all students work together to achieve harmonious integration. Parents must support the effort by becoming involved with their children, the administrators, and the teachers. More active enthusiasm on their part will reinforce the need for mainstreaming and ensure its benefits.

The intent of Public Law 94-142 can be realized as an equal opportunity for education, provided to all handicapped persons. Continued disregard for the law will only perpetuate and magnify the problems associated with the ineffective mainstreaming of these special children in the public schools.

"We must recognize that no specific area of . . . education can offer any meaningful solutions to all of the issues, and that a significant resolution to the

mainstreaming dilemma can only occur if administrators from regular education and special education combine in a comprehensive approach to overcome the disjointedness of present categorical programs" (Wang & Raymonds, p. 26).

C H A P T E R III

METHODOLOGY

The review of literature in Chapter II has portrayed current programs, outside of Massachusetts, which are viewed as models, in terms of their administrative approach to mainstreaming. Examples of effective strategies were presented, along with descriptions of actual programs and reasons for their success. The literature chapter also contained an historical look at the background and development of mainstreaming, to provide a context for this study, as well as financial information relevant to Massachusetts, to provide a clearer picture of financial dimensions of the mainstreaming issue.

Within this context, a small survey was also conducted utilizing five educators of each of five selected Massachusetts school districts, which have implemented or are attempting to implement a mainstreaming program. This study serves as a preliminary step toward the development of the strategies needed for a more effective integrated program.

Subjects

Subjects were selected from a sample of five Massachusetts school districts which had been identified by the State Department of Education as having developed effective programs of mainstreaming. The researcher contacted the superintendent's office in each district to request that s/he select administrative staff to participate in the study. Initial contact, made by telephone, was followed by a letter and enclosures including five questionnaires, consent forms, and return envelopes. Each superintendent was asked to identify five elementary-level administrators, including a principal, and an evaluation team leader or coordinator, who might complete the questionnaire. Three of the five systems (Arlington, Cambridge, and Rockland) agreed to participate. This resulted in 14 subjects participating from three districts. The 14 subjects included 8 principals, 4 special education directors, 1 speech therapist and 1 psychologist.

Development of Questionnaire

The questionnaire, which addresses 12 issues for administrators, was designed to obtain information on the given school district's procedures for developing a mainstream special education program, and to provide

administrators with the opportunity to offer suggestions for organizing a similar approach to integration. The questions include inquiries about the relationship between administrators, staff, and parents. The literature review presented in Chapter 2 informed the contents of the questionnaire. That review revealed that critical to successful efforts were variables such as leadership commitment, teacher and parent involvement, attitudes, initiative, understanding of financial implications, higher level support, and staffing. The researcher designed statements related to these variables such that respondents could express levels of agreement or disagreement on a Likert-type scale. In addition, the researcher developed related open-ended questions to encourage further elaboration by and insights from participants.

This draft was reviewed by three dissertation committee members and two public school administrators. Feedback from these five reviewers was used to develop a second draft. This draft was again reviewed by the chairperson, and revisions were incorporated into the final version which is included in Appendix D.

Interviews

To gather further data and insights beyond the questionnaire responses, the researcher conducted interviews with four administrators, including at least one representative from each of the three school systems. Each interview lasted from 70 to 90 minutes and was taped. Interviewees were nominated by their superintendents and consented to be interviewed.

To guide the interviews, the researcher developed 13 interview questions which included inquiries about administrative actions, obstacles, current problems, staff development, costs, and personal rewards related to effective mainstreaming. Interview questions are included in Appendix E.

Data Analysis

This study was conducted in order to gain insight into the ways some integrated programs have been designed, and to help decide whether these techniques can be applied to the development of successful programs elsewhere in Massachusetts.

The 14 respondents to the questionnaire were analyzed as an aggregate rather than by districts, given the small sample size. Questionnaire data was analyzed in two ways. For each of the nine Likert-type items, percentages of responses in each of the five

possible response categories were calculated and represented in graphic form. For open-ended questions, all responses were included and reported verbatim in the results section.

Interview tapes were reviewed in their entirety by the researcher. The listening was guided by the interview questions (Appendix E). Notes were kept summarizing basic points made in relation to each of the questions. Special note was made of quotations which seemed particularly compelling to the researcher. These are included, verbatim, in sections of the results chapter.

The review of the literature can also be considered a part of the data analysis, as it focused on five key issues, which are also the issues analyzed in Chapter IV. They are:

1. a focus on the collaborative effort of regular education and special education teachers to work as a team for mainstreaming;
2. the importance of the mainstreaming of the administrator-teacher relationship;
3. input on how parents are involved in the integration of their children, and on how they have worked together with administrators;

possible response categories were calculated and represented in graphic form. For open-ended questions, all responses were included and reported verbatim in the results section.

Interview tapes were reviewed in their entirety by the researcher. The listening was guided by the interview questions (Appendix B). Notes were kept summarizing basic points made in relation to each of the questions. Special note was made of quotations which seemed particularly compelling to the researcher. These are included, verbatim, in sections of the results chapter.

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1. a focus on the collaborative effort of regular education and special education teachers to work as a team for mainstreaming;
2. the importance of the mainstreaming of the administrator-teacher relationship;
3. input on how parents are involved in the integration of their children, and on how they have worked together with administrators;

4. cost of mainstreaming vs. separate classrooms; and
5. why it is productive to have a supportive administrative environment.

C H A P T E R IV

RESULTS

Results are reported in the following sequence:

a) findings from Likert-type statements on the questionnaire;

b) a summary of responses to open-ended questions on the questionnaire; and

c) results of interviews conducted with four administrators.

Findings from Likert-type Statements

Table 1 provides a summary of responses to all Likert-type statements.

Table 1

Administrators' Responses to Likert-type Items (reported in percentages; n = 14)

Item	SA	A	D	SD	?
1. Importance of mainstreaming	100	-	-	-	-
2. Staff cooperation	17	25	58	-	-
3. Early negative attitudes	50	50	-	-	-
4. Parents' initiative	-	8	75	8	9
5. Financial advantage	67	25	8	-	-
6. State support	-	67	25	-	8
7. Difficulty recruiting	42	8	42	8	-
8. Adequate staff training	-	42	50	8	-
9. Teachers supportive	-	42	8	8	42

Summary of Findings from Likert-type Statements

A full 100 percent of those surveyed strongly agreed that mainstreaming is important in their school systems; some went into considerable detail about the success of their mainstreaming programs.

Fifty-eight percent of the administrators surveyed said they had not received cooperation from the majority of their staff members in implementing the mainstreaming. This supports the information reported in the Summary below, citing the overall hesitation by both regular and special education staff members. During the first year of implementation, 50 percent of the administrators strongly agreed that they encountered negative attitudes from staff members. The other 50 percent answered that they agreed. Thus all the administrators questioned did encounter negative attitudes.

Seventy-five percent disagreed with the statement that parents approached them about mainstreaming their children. It is clear that in most schools, it is the administration that has taken the initiative.

The majority of those surveyed are aware of the financial advantage of a mainstreaming program, in comparison to substantially separate settings. Sixty-seven percent strongly agreed that there was an

advantage. Sixty-seven percent also stated that they had received support from the State of Massachusetts.

Forty-five percent strongly agreed that it has been difficult to recruit skilled and licensed professionals, one administrator citing a shortage of speech and language teachers. Forty-two percent saw no problem in this area. Thus, teacher availability seems to vary according to the location of the school district. Fifty percent said staff members were not adequately trained to work with both mildly handicapped and non-handicapped students in the same classroom. Some of these respondents pointed to the absence of a comprehensive training program.

During the first year of the program, 42 percent said that teachers were supportive in implementing a mainstreaming program; another 42 percent remained undecided. This clearly shows that in the beginning stages many administrators are faced with ambiguous responses, ambivalent attitudes, and a profound hesitation from staff members. Because of these findings, it appears that the final outcome rests primarily in the hands of the administrator. Other results from Questions One to Nine are in the graphs in Appendix C.

Summary of Responses to Open-ended Questions

At the building level the majority of respondents underscored the need for collegial approaches to planning; they saw high teacher involvement and high staff input as critical to getting started. One principal, drawing on her experience, suggests that schools

> . . . allow program ownership to teachers who do mainstream. Facilitate as much as possible when requests don't interfere with rules or policy. Hold frequent meetings (talk sessions) with teachers.

Another administrator recommended that implementers

> . . . start small with regular educators and special education teachers who are committed; recognize and reward their efforts . . . teachers need to know what resources they have to draw on.

Administrators pointed out that they cannot work independently of staff input:

> . . .clear systemwide policies need to be developed and implemented.

They warned that group approaches to planning must recognize the absolute need to involve all staff in planning and implementation.

> We have developed a building-based support team to help with specific issues of mainstreaming. This team consists of at least on representative from regular education, special education and special subject teachers.

The same administrator advocated being involved with the school's design of the program, and the hiring of personnel. Another administrator advised,

> Make sure staff is prepared, had adequate help and wants to do it [mainstreaming].

When you are planning and implementing a plan, says another administrator, do your groundwork, and give regular staff input into the development of the model.

A psychologist also offered suggestions on implementing mainstreaming:

> However, as a school psychologist, I had had many problems of implementing mainstreaming--many revolving around the fact that I did not adequately prepare regular education staff.

Training and support were also identified by a majority of respondents as key elements in any successful central administration level initiative. One psychologist recommended that the administration

> . . . provide a good deal of inservice prior to actually implementing mainstreaming. Be sure that the special educators know what their new role will be and how to best handle the role, i.e., generic consultants. Be sure to emphasize to building level administrators the central administration's commitment to mainstreaming.

A principal pointed out that

> . . . sped personnel needs to be experienced, mature, work cooperatively with all types of staff. New teachers are not good people to be in this position [mainstreaming].

Other principals made these suggestions:

> Restructure elementary schools so that teachers work in teams; have common planning time each day, and one paid to attend workshops during the summer and the school year.
>
> Establish clear policies with input from regular and special education staff. Mainstreaming activities need to be recognized and rewarded. Most important, in-service needs to be updated and ongoing--teachers need to know that they have both the right and the responsibility to adopt curriculum for all students. Too often we refer to in-service as "teacher training" which suggests a very limited model and a view of teachers as limited. We ned to view in-services as "teacher education" because a successful program depends on intelligent, creative staff.

A closely related theme that reappears throughout the questionnaire is the need for cooperation from all involved. For example, "teachers, parents, and administrative staff must be involved in this for a smooth transition." Some administrators encourage

> . . . involvement of regular classroom teachers as an integral part of all planning and decision-making processes; create a school climate which respects diversity and encourages collegiality among regular and special education teachers, helping teachers enhance opportunities for children.

Several principals described specific difficulties in the implementation of mainstreaming:

> . . . when you have building-level administrators in 1990 continuing to suggest that there are very few formal structures on mainstreaming available, we know mandate laws of 94-142 are not being implemented.

> . . . more than one substantially separate class should not exist in a school. Be careful of overburdening any one school with substantially separate programs.

Another spoke of the

> . . . awareness that mainstreaming in large classes is difficult--allowances must be made for large class sizes.

And another detailed her needs as follows:

> . . . time to prepare faculty, parents and teachers; professional development for teachers; be sure I am going to receive necessary support from central administrators.

However, aware of these difficulties, principals also had some very specific suggestions to make. One pointed out how important it was to

> . . . demonstrate a true commitment to the mainstreaming philosophy through support and visibility. Provide additional incentives for those willing to mainstream.

Another summarized that school's early experience:

> Encourage staff to go out and view successful mainstreamed programs. Provide more materials and aids to assist classroom teachers.

Another pointed out that principals have to

> . . . support decisions made at building level--both by presence and money!

Finally, one pointed out the need to

> . . . provide support for principals.

In conclusion, this researcher was struck by the following four suggestions from respondents:

Solicit volunteers both regular and special education.

Train--train--train.

Involve regular and special education parents.

. . . more support--teaching methodologies and materials and listen to what the staff recommends.

These responses could be valuable for any administration, not only those involved in mainstreaming.

Summary

The following discussion derives directly from the information obtained through interviews with administrators. The programs described have been cited by their regional offices as exemplary; they provide successful mainstreaming opportunities for special needs students and promote collaboration between regular and special educators.

First, the majority of participants stressed that they saw an obvious hesitation, mainly on the part of the regular education staff, to even consider adding an integrated program. Exhibiting varying levels of fear, regular education teachers were reluctant to bring special education students into their classrooms. In one urban setting, a few of the staff saw it as "inconsistent with their role," and "not leading them into something especially productive." Administrators,

took a range of actions to try and improve negative attitudes. Some of these actions were: in-service presentations from professionals within the school system, as well as consultants from outside; opportunities for the regular education staff to visit other school systems with mainstreaming programs; reduced class size; open discussions with staff; extra material, and as much special education assistance as possible; a moratorium on mainstreaming for the first three weeks of school; and positive responses from teachers who had previously mainstreamed in other schools.

Of course, administrators found it easier to develop a better working relationship with those who showed more interest. One reported, "a majority of our regular education teachers have wanted to work in a cooperative fashion, but they have all needed varying degrees of support--some more than others."

On the positive side, school administrators expressed their views on which aspects of the program have sparked their enthusiasm. For example,

> A real plus has been the benefits of a 'normalizing environment.' Having special needs students establish relationships in a peer group, benefits normal children as well, as they develop an appreciation for an element of our population they may not know much about. They may have based what they know on hearsay or inaccuracies. They

> eventually come to protect the disabled students.

The respondents said one of the major advantages of an integrated program is that it allows abilities to surface, which are otherwise "not as well-tapped or explored in a segregated setting." It has become an accepted practice to base learning on "what a youngster can handle."

Administrators reported that most often, mainstreaming begins early, from the beginning of a child's school years. When it is an ongoing process, referral problems rare. But there has to be a tremendous amount of support from the start. Occasionally, a child is moved from a segregated program to an integrated one, but most remain in separate programs throughout the school years. This is often the preference of a parent who sees no advantage to a self-contained classroom.

One administrator described the self-contained classroom programming in his district.

> Such programs contained children who were emotionally disturbed, very developmentally delayed, seriously learning disabled, hearing impaired, and/or blind.

Those with learning disabilities attended learning centers (or resource centers). When it comes to defining learning disabilities, one administrator feels that the law has been flexible. "The legislature had

no sense of the population involved when the law was enacted."

Some administrators were unclear on the part that state funding has played, perhaps because it is not part of their personal job to follow the funding aspect.

The respondents stressed the value of lots of open discussion meetings, rather than a comprehensive training program. One principal mentioned that

> . . . it was difficult making the teachers understand that this is a law and it is mandated. There are special education and regular education students, but, combined, they all become the teacher's students and the teacher is responsible to teach them.

During a typical day in most classrooms which include mainstreamed students, their mainstreaming experience revolves around non-academic programs. The typical student spends less than fifty percent of the day in an integrated setting. Instead, they spend shorter, more frequent periods of time in regular education settings over the course of a week. Most commonly, classes falling into that category are Music, Art, and Physical Education (at least one of two classes).

Less important for these students are the subjects of science and social studies. Mainstreamed students may also participate in reading programs and various

social activities; sometimes teachers or aides accompany them. In one suburban setting, a new reading program encompasses a wider scope of academic learning for the mainstreamed youngster, other than the usual limited classes mentioned above. A principal of that district elaborated:

> The program is set up so that the resource teacher sees all of the youngsters during the week. She may not see the same children each day, but all three resource aides follow along with her schedule. One teacher from each grade level has agreed to take special education children and mainstream them. We have agreed to give that teacher a smaller number of students in a regular classroom. Our grade four level has taken a team-teaching approach. A Science, a Math, and an English teacher have combined their skills to mainstream four youngsters in all three classrooms. It has worked out beautifully.

One urban school district, which includes several self-contained classrooms at the elementary level, also has three very successful collaborative programs. The director explained,

> Ours is one of a few state-wide programs that has its administrative hierarchy within each of the four school districts. It has been a major benefit to have no administrative group (or overhead) outsider.

Administrators agree that there are always areas that need improvement. One said they aim to

> . . . remain committed and not let the program slide; use whatever resources are available, build upon what has already been accomplished, even if it is without state aid; and continue to support staff without overwhelming people.

One teacher said this about mainstreaming:

> Some people see it as a panacea for escaping responsibilities that are implicit under Chapter 766, in providing a continuum of program opportunities. That seems unrealistic in terms of the kinds of students we have talked about.

Three essential qualities were mentioned: patience, forbearance, and acceptance. If administration, staff, and parents, can remember these qualities, it will lead to the ultimate success of the mainstreaming program.

Intent of the Study

The intent of this study was successfully accomplished. Even though one school system declined to participate, citing their lack of financial support from the state, the other administrators interviewed were quite verbal, providing the study with necessary information. One other school system declined to answer either the interview or the questionnaire, stating that these methods were too intrusive. However, the study did include information from three fairly representative school districts.

C H A P T E R V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to identify specific problems and effective administrative strategies for the integration of mildly handicapped students into regular education in selected Massachusetts elementary schools. In this action research study, I have focused on the suggestions provided to me by administrators in the three Massachusetts Public Schools who were surveyed and interviewed.

According to Massachusetts state law Chapter 766 and federal law Public Law 94-142, public schools are required to provide education for students in a mainstreaming setting. Contrary to the intent of the legislation, students are still being placed in substantially separate programs.

The overall success of a mainstreaming program lies in the relationship between administrators, staff, and parents. The key ingredient is unlimited involvement at the administrative level, and the ability to develop effective techniques for enhancing integration. In order to succeed in the development of an effective mainstreamed program, it is critical that administrators encourage and improve interaction

between regular and special education staff members; identify negative attitudes and work toward improving attitude problems; and involve staff in the development of the model, as well as the ultimate implementation of the program.

The review of literature in Chapter II has portrayed current programs, outside of Massachusetts, which are viewed as models in terms of their administrative approach to mainstreaming. Examples of effective strategies were presented, along with descriptions of actual programs and reasons for their success. The literature chapter also contained a historical look at the background and development of mainstreaming, to provide a context for this study, as well as financial information relevant t Massachusetts, to provide a clearer picture of financial dimensions of the mainstreaming issue.

Furthermore, a small survey was also conducted utilizing five educators in each of five selected Massachusetts School districts, which have implemented or are attempting to implement a mainstreaming program. This study serves as a preliminary step toward the development of the strategies needed for a more effective integrated program.

General Recommendations

The following discussion has been contrived directly from information obtained through interviews with various school administrators. Administrators gave the following advice to school-based administrators.

Always try to solicit volunteers from both regular and special education departments, that demonstrate commitment to the mainstreaming philosophy through support and visibility.

When possible, provide additional incentives for teachers willing to mainstream.

Do your groundwork, and give regular staff input into developing the model. Allow "ownership for programs to teachers who are willing to mainstream.

Develop a building-based support team to help with specific issues of mainstreaming, consisting of at least one representative each from regular education, special education, and special subject teachers.

Facilitate as much as possible, when requests do not interfere with rules or policy.

Take adequate time to prepare faculty, parents, and teachers.

Become involved with the actual design of the program and hiring of personnel.

Start small with regular and special education teachers who are committed. Recognize and reward their efforts. Develop and implement clear system-wide policies.

The following advice to central administration was derived from the questionnaires:

Do your groundwork before implementation in individual schools.

Restructure elementary schools so that teachers work in teams. Have common planning time each day. Arrange for teachers to be paid to attend workshops during the summer and school year.

Provide a good deal of in-service training before actually implementing mainstreaming. Be sure the special educators know what their new role will be, and how to best handle the role, i.e. generic consultants. Be sure to emphasize to building-level administrators the central administration's commitment to mainstreaming.

Support decisions made at building level--both by presence and by funding.

Encourage staff to go out and view successful mainstreamed programs. Provide more materials and aides to assist classroom teachers.

Be aware that mainstreaming in large classes is difficult. Administrators can reduce the class size of

regular classroom teachers involved in integrated programs.

More than one substantially separate class should exist in a school. Be careful of overburdening any one school with substantially separate programs.

Provide support for principal.

Provide adequate staffing.

Recommendations for Future Action

The Massachusetts Department of Education has mandated compliance of mainstreaming by 1991. The present study has identified a set of administrative actions which can facilitate achieving compliance. Implementation of the MAC's recommendations (1987) would strengthen, and, perhaps, will be essential, in the efforts to move toward compliance. A sample of the Center's recommendations, which constitute an agenda for future action, includes: developing data analysis systems to identify cases of excess segregation and/or restriction of students; and to provide this data to school systems for decision-making purposes; creating integration monitoring teams representing all constituents to undertake on-site reviews, and make recommendations which have legal and economic force. Develop explicit policy statements, goals, and time

schedules to comply with the mandate to educate all students in the least restrictive environment.

Recommendations for Future Research

Administrators should be aware of the large proportions of minority and bilingual students assigned to separate programs. Future research could be carried out efficiently if the Department of Education improved its system for data collection in the following ways:

Collect information about the types of disabilities among children receiving special education services in the various program prototypes.

Determine the number of students served in collaboratives.

Gather data on the amount of time students in separate classrooms spend in regular education programs.

Develop a system for tracking the movement of students into more and less restrictive prototypes, and for documenting the number of students who leave special education completely (Massachusetts Advocacy Center, 1987, pp. 49-50).

If the Department of Education were to follow these recommendations, future researchers would be able to focus on a wider range of statewide model programs, by having such information readily available, i.e.,

identifying students served in collaboratives, and those progressing into less restrictive environments.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

LETTER TO SUPERINTENDENTS

LETTER TO SUPERINTENDENTS

Dear Superintendent:

I am a Doctoral candidate at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Massachusetts 01003. As part of my dissertation study, I am conducting a survey of administrators from five separate school districts. My research is limited to those administrators in Massachusetts who are considering implementing a program of integration of regular education students with mildly handicapped children within their schools.

I would be delighted to examine your particular program because: (1) either the State Department of Education indicated that it serves as an exceptionally outstanding example of such a program, or (2) through personal contacts, while performing my job in the field of Special Education, I have been provided with the name of your school district as a successful model program. I would like to have the opportunity to learn more about your mainstreaming program. I believe you possess much information from which I could greatly benefit.

I hope to gain insight into how various mainstreaming programs have worked effectively. I hope to determine if it is feasible that such ideas and recommendations can be successfully applied to schools which are experiencing difficulty in developing efficient and productive mainstreaming programs.

Enclosed please find five separate questionnaires. Each one should be presented to an individual elementary school administrator (principal, Evaluation Team leader or coordinator), designated by the Superintendent, for completion. All participants are required to complete Form 7A, Human Subject Consent Form, which is included in this package.

I will be contacting you to arrange an appointment for an interview, after completion of the enclosed material. The results of the survey will be furnished upon request of the respondent. Please indicate in the space provided if you desire this information.

Thank you very much for your cooperation and assistance. I look forward to meeting you and learning about your program.

Respectfully yours,

Dorothy R. Washington

Enclosures

APPENDIX B

HUMAN SUBJECT CONSENT FORM

HUMAN SUBJECT CONSENT FORM

TO: _____

SCHOOL: _____

_____ Massachusetts _____
(city/town) (zip code)

FROM: Dorothy R. Washington, Doctoral Student
School of Education, University of Massachusetts
Amherst, Massachusetts 01003

RE: Participation in Research Study Regarding Effective Administrative Techniques for Mainstreaming Derived from Selected Massachusetts Public Elementary Schools

I, Dorothy R. Washington, am a doctoral student of the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, Massachusetts. I am in the process of completing the requirements for a doctoral degree in Education. My dissertation will be a study of administrative approaches to mainstreaming which have been effective at the elementary school level, administrative techniques derived from selected schools in Massachusetts, as well as review of literature of several model programs outside of Massachusetts. I am interested in finding out what specific strategies you used to develop and establish mainstreaming programs in your school system. In addition, I would like to get your recommendations that could benefit other school programs. Also, outline what difficulties you experienced in devising a successful integrated program.

Your school system is considered to be one of five outstanding Massachusetts systems chosen to participate in this study. These schools have been selected for one of the following reasons: (1) The State Department of Education has cited the school(s) as one implementing a mainstreaming program; or (2) through further investigative research, I have been informed that the school(s) is viewed as one that sets an example.

I hope that you will agree to take part in the study. If you do, you will e asked to complete a brief questionnaire. Following the return of the questionnaire, I will contact you to set up a convenient time for a personal interview.

My goal is to obtain useful information which can be applied as research material gathered for my doctoral dissertation. I will not, under any circumstances, reveal your name or the name of any other participant in the study. I will, however, disclose the name(s) of the school system(s) from which I have obtained information. All results will be reported by the total sample rather than individually.

APPENDIX C

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR QUESTIONNAIRE RECIPIENTS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR QUESTIONNAIRE RECIPIENTS

NAME: _____

SCHOOL SYSTEM:
_____

JOB TITLE: _____

SCHOOL POPULATION (ENROLLMENT): _____

Would you be interested in receiving the results of this questionnaire? _____Yes _____No

APPENDIX D

QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. As an administrator, I view mainstreaming as an important goal of my school.

STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	UNDECIDED
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

2. I received cooperation from the majority of my staff, in regard to mainstreaming.

STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	UNDECIDED
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

3. During the first year of implementation, some members of my staff had negative attitudes toward the integration of handicapped students.

STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	UNDECIDED
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

4. As an administrator, parents have approached me to have their children mainstreamed, rather than my initiating the approach toward integration.

STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	UNDECIDED
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

5. I am aware of the financial advantage of integrating mildly handicapped youngsters, as compared to placement in substantially separate settings.

STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	UNDECIDED
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

6. I have received support from the Massachusetts Department of Education for my efforts toward mainstreaming.

STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	UNDECIDED
____	____	____	____	____

7. I have had difficulty in recruiting skilled and licensed professionals (i.e., Speech Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Psychologists).

STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	UNDECIDED
____	____	____	____	____

8. Our school has provided adequate training to help staff members, working with both mildly handicapped and non-handicapped students in the same classroom.

STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	UNDECIDED
____	____	____	____	____

9. During the first year, teachers were supportive in implementing mainstreaming of students from a separate classroom to an integrated setting.

STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	UNDECIDED
____	____	____	____	____

10. What significant problems did you, as an administrator, face in implementing a mainstreaming program for your school system?

_____

_____

_____

11. When the mainstreaming program was put into effect, was it mandatory, or was it a voluntary decision? Who decided? Please explain?

_____

_____

_____

12. Based upon your experience, what specific recommendations would you make to a school planning to design and implement an integrated program based administration and to central office administration?

Advice to School-Based Administration:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Advice to Central Administration:

_____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

INTERVIEW SUBJECT:

SCHOOL DISTRICT:

DATE OF INTERVIEW:

1. What were some of your initial actions, as an administrator, that were put into effect, to support your staff in the development of a mainstreaming program?

2. Which component(s) of the mainstreaming process were you most enthusiastic about? Did you encounter any difficulties upon implementing such a component(s)?

3. What portion(s) of your developmental plan presented the most challenges and difficulties for you, prior to the implementation of your program?

4. Could you briefly describe a typical day in one of your elementary school's classrooms, where children take part in a mainstreaming program?

5. Are you encountering any problems in your present process of referral to your mainstreaming program, rather than recommending the child to a separate, segregated classroom?

6. Were staff members provided with a comprehensive training program, prior to the implementation of your procedures for mainstreaming?

7. To what degree have parents been involved in the planning process of integration? Is this mainly through your efforts or theirs?

8. Is there anything you would like to add, in regard to your staff's involvement in an integrated program?

9. In comparing the costs of a program of mainstreaming, in contrast to placement in substantially separate settings, what conclusions have you reached? Which appears to be more expensive?

10. How does it make you, personally, feel, now that you have taken part in forming a successful integrated program in your school district?

11. Do you have any future goals in mind to further enhance the success of your program (such as increasing the number of students, hiring additional staff, etc.)?

12. Have other school districts approached you for information or guidelines on your program?

13. Are there any aspects of your procedures for mainstreaming that you feel need improvement? What actions have you taken to upgrade these areas?

APPENDIX F

SUPERINTENDENT LETTER OF THANKS

SUPERINTENDENT LETTER OF THANKS

Dear Superintendent:

Enclosed you will find the results of the questionnaires and interviews your school system administrators participated in. My finding for this research has been very informative.

The successful techniques you have shared are well designed. They can be used with other systems which are experiencing difficulty in implementing an effective mainstreaming program.

It was a learning experience for me. Also, it helped with the requirements needed for the Doctoral program from the University of Massachusetts.

Please thank each participating and distribute the findings with each person involved. My thanks to you for allowing the study to be done.

Wishing you and your school system continued success.

Sincerely yours,

Dorothy R. Washington

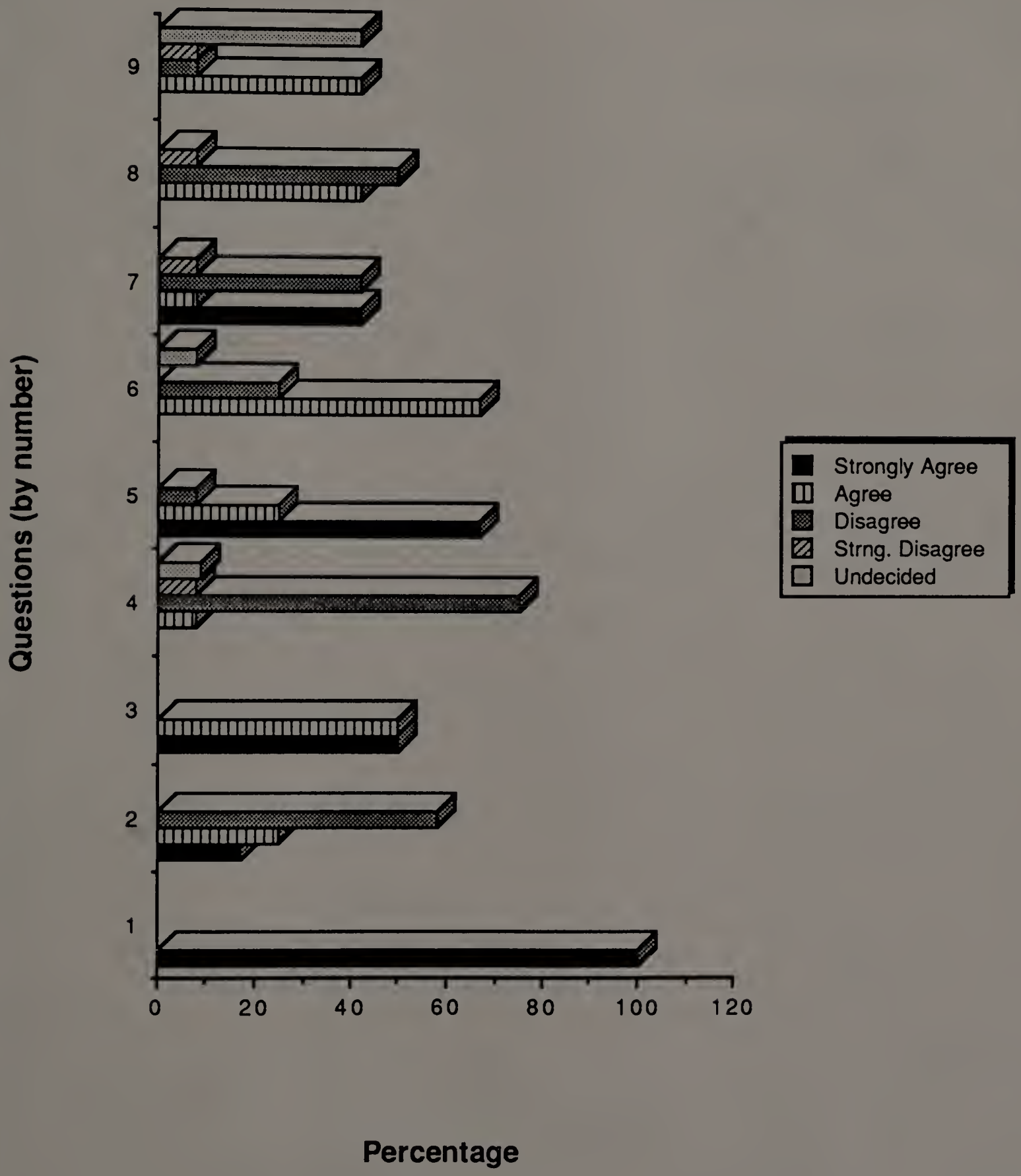
Dorothy R. Washington

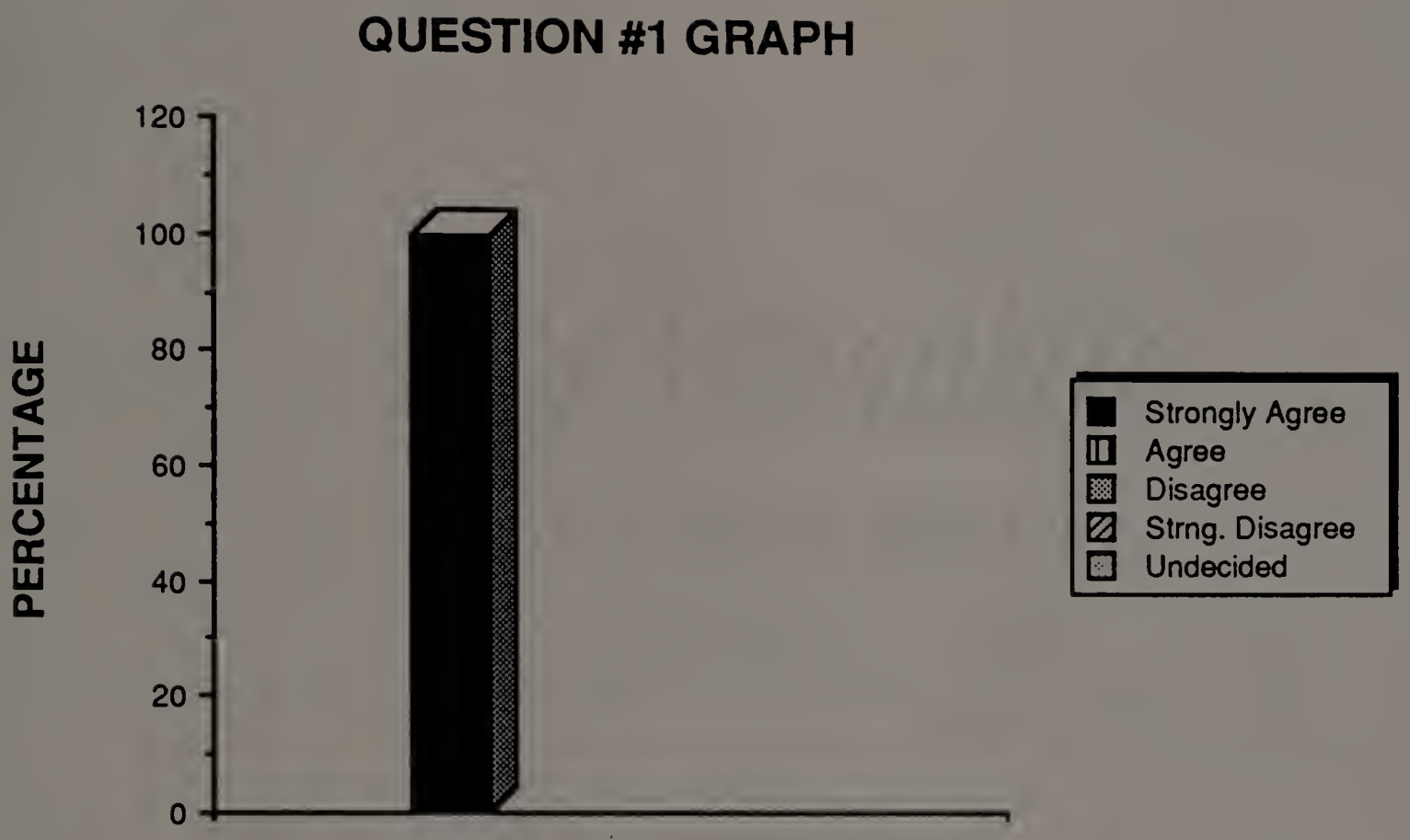
Enclosure

APPENDIX G

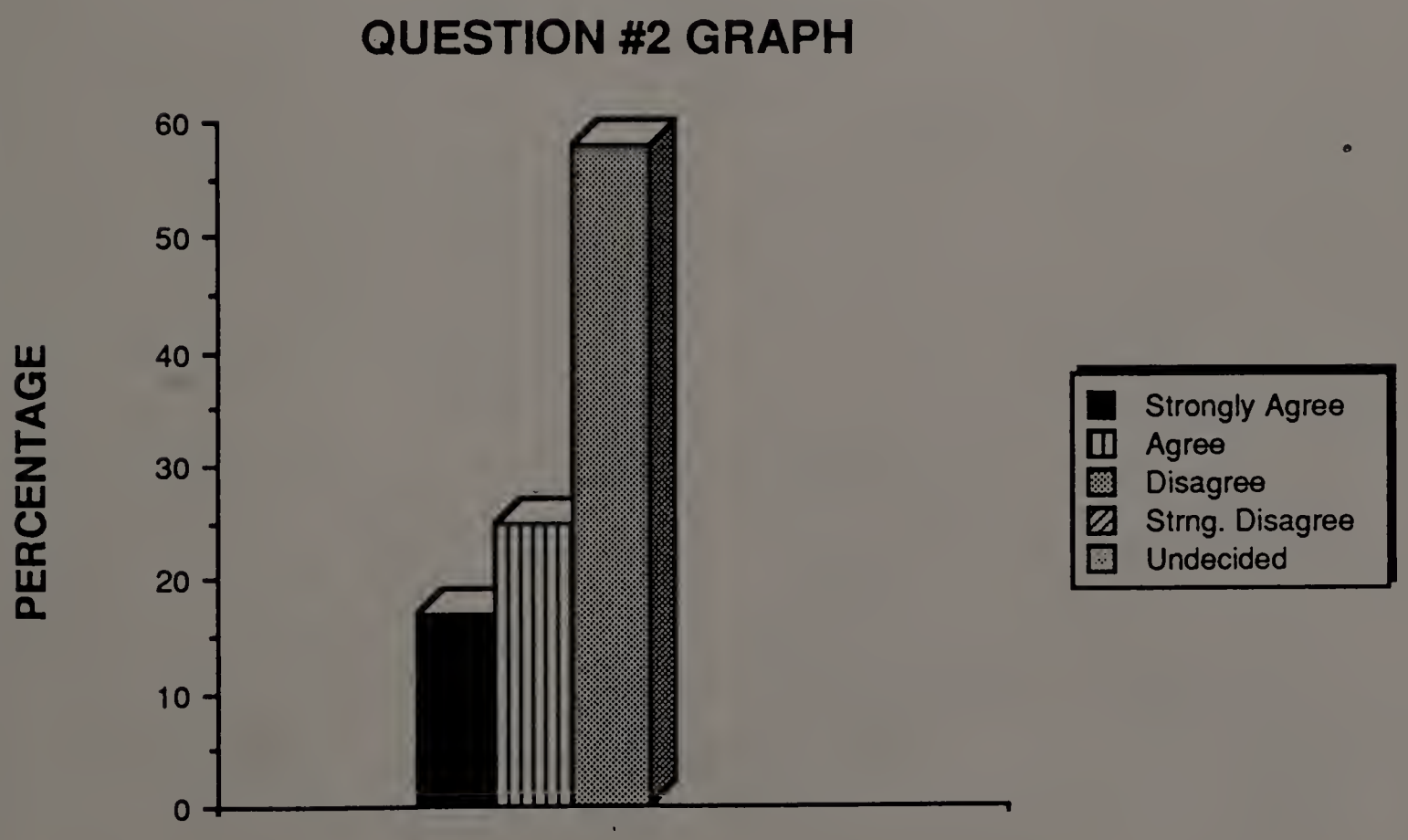
MAINSTREAMING QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS AND GRAPHS

Mainstreaming Questionnaire Results

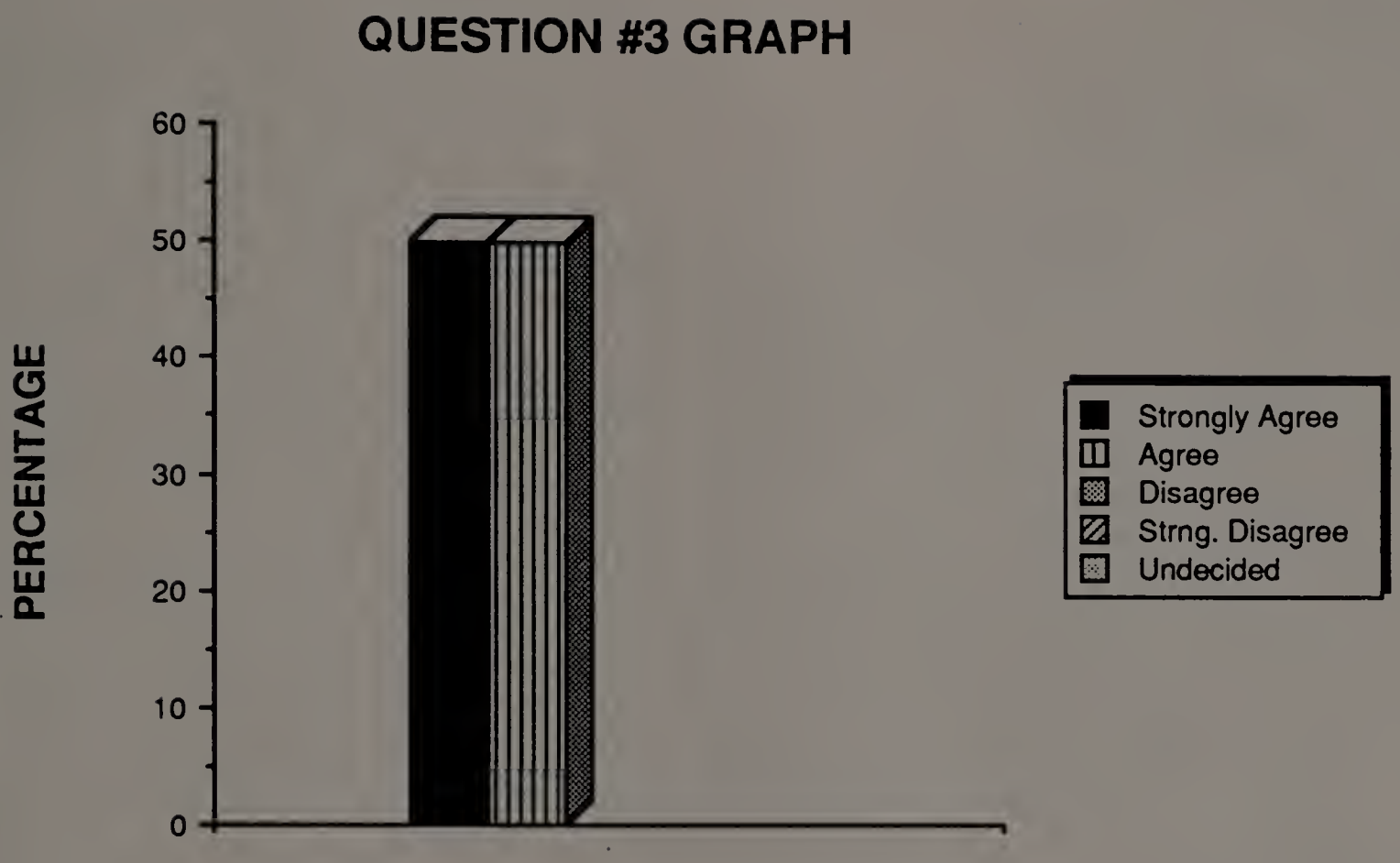




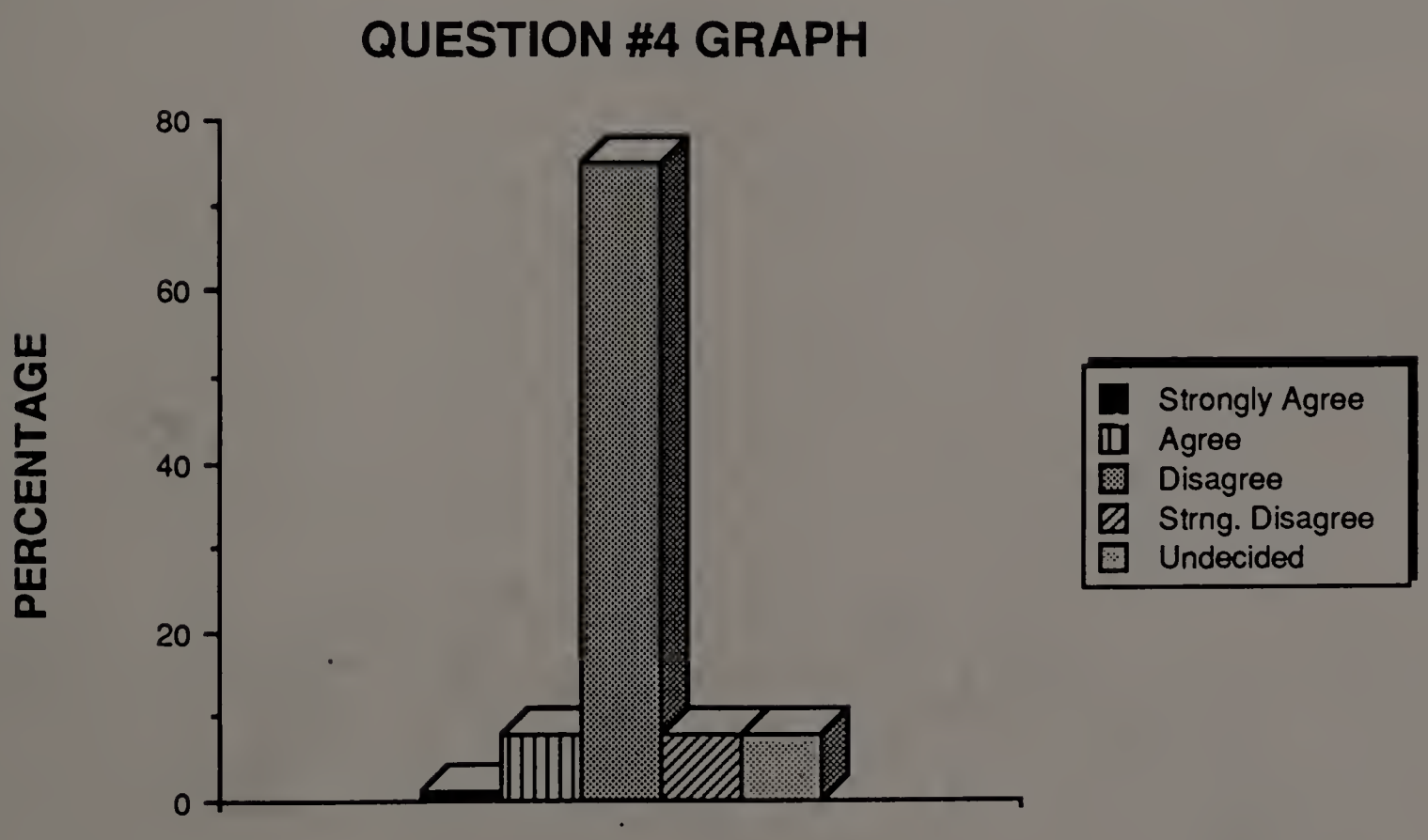
1. I view mainstreaming as an important part of my school system.



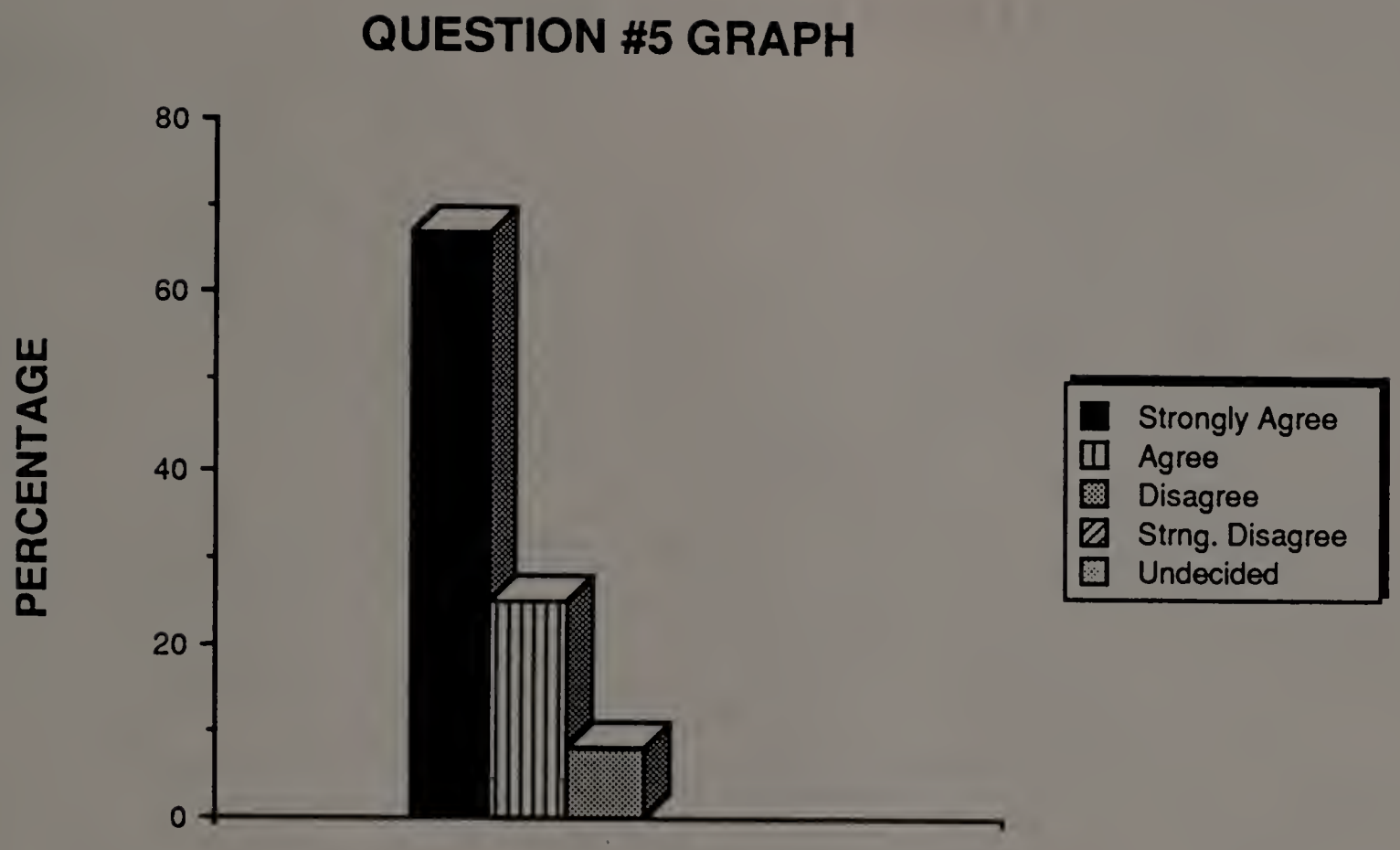
2. I received cooperation from the majority of my staff, in implementing a mainstreaming program.



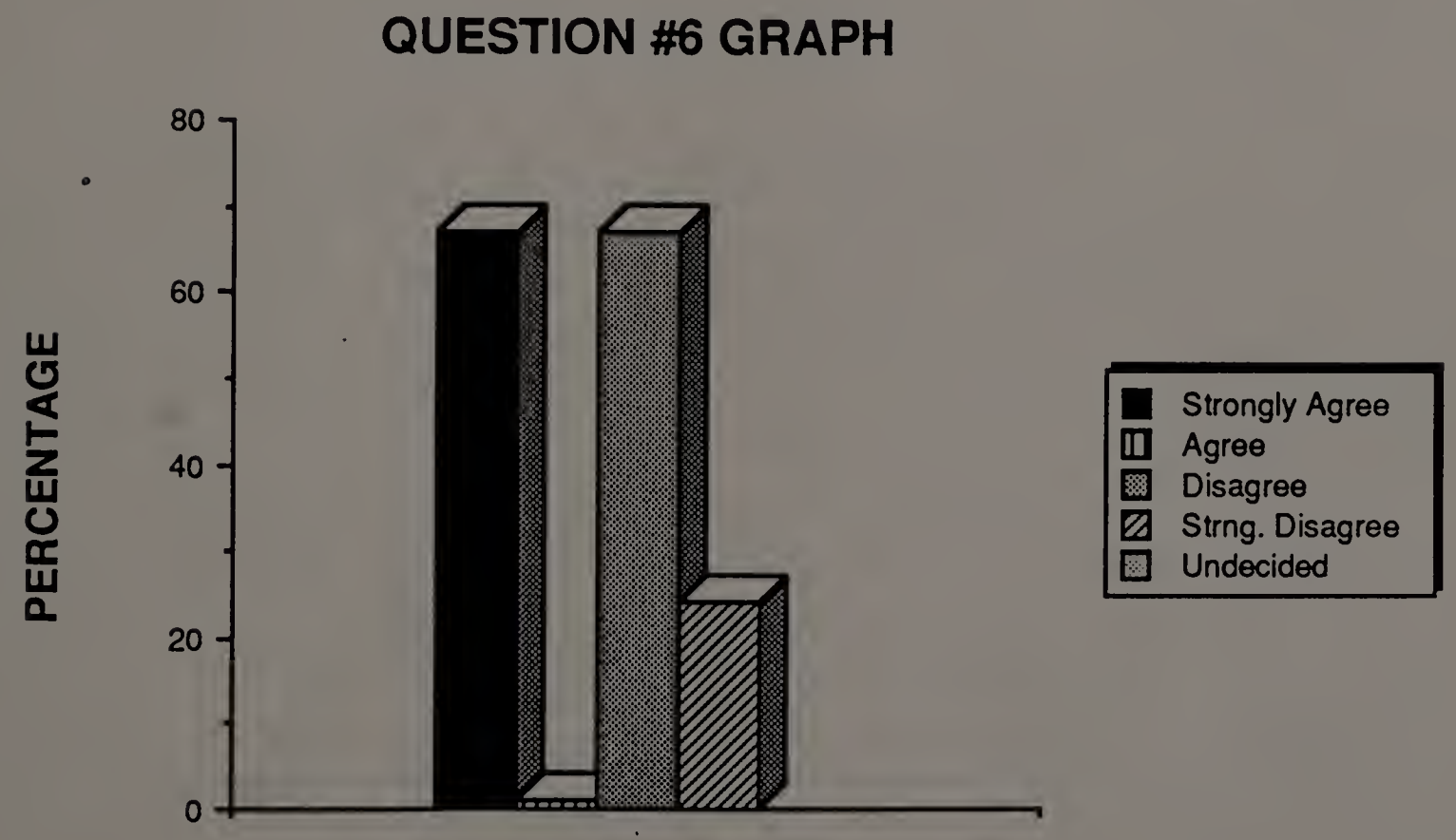
3. Administrators that encountered negative attitude from staff.



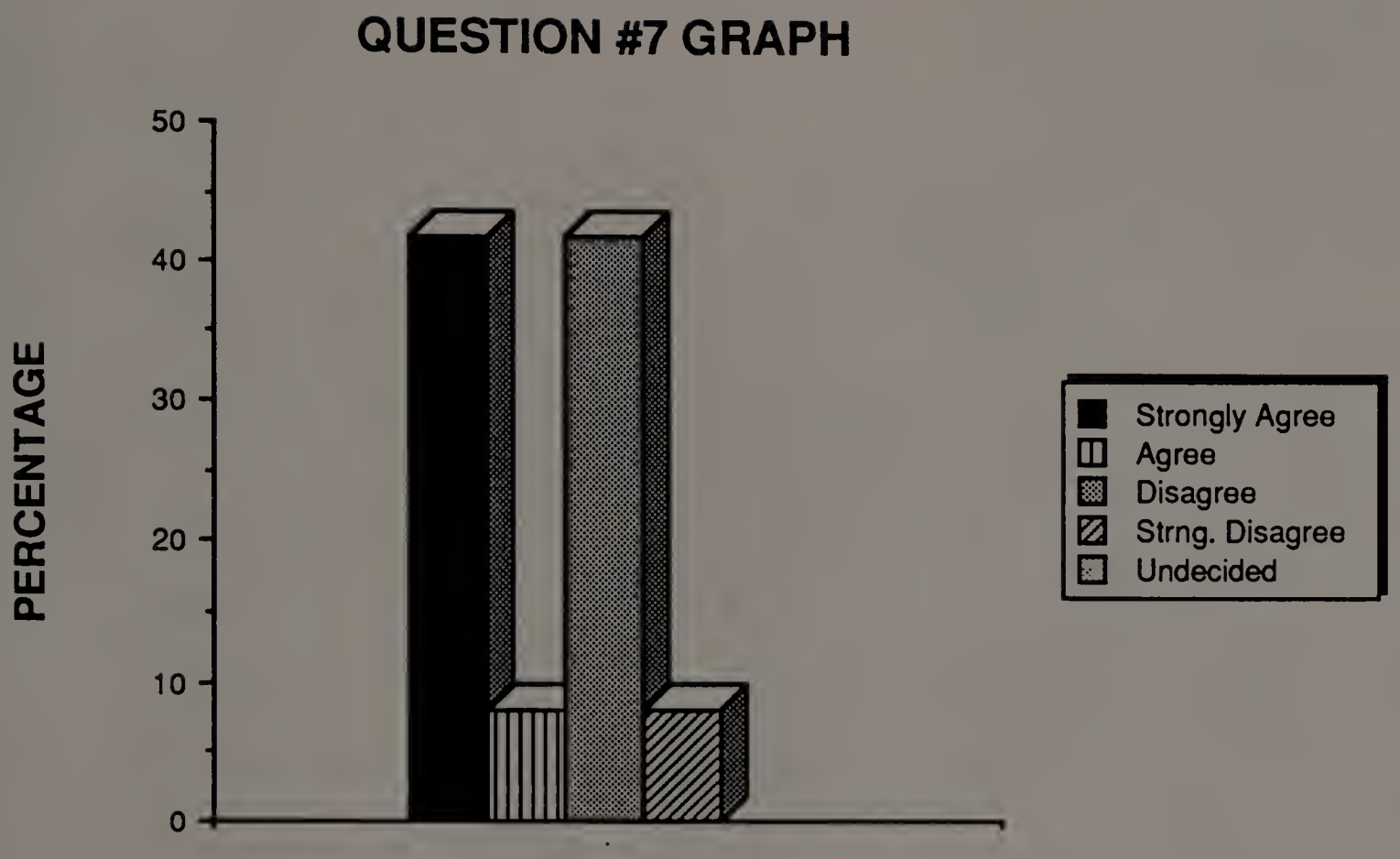
4. Parents who have initiated mainstreaming.



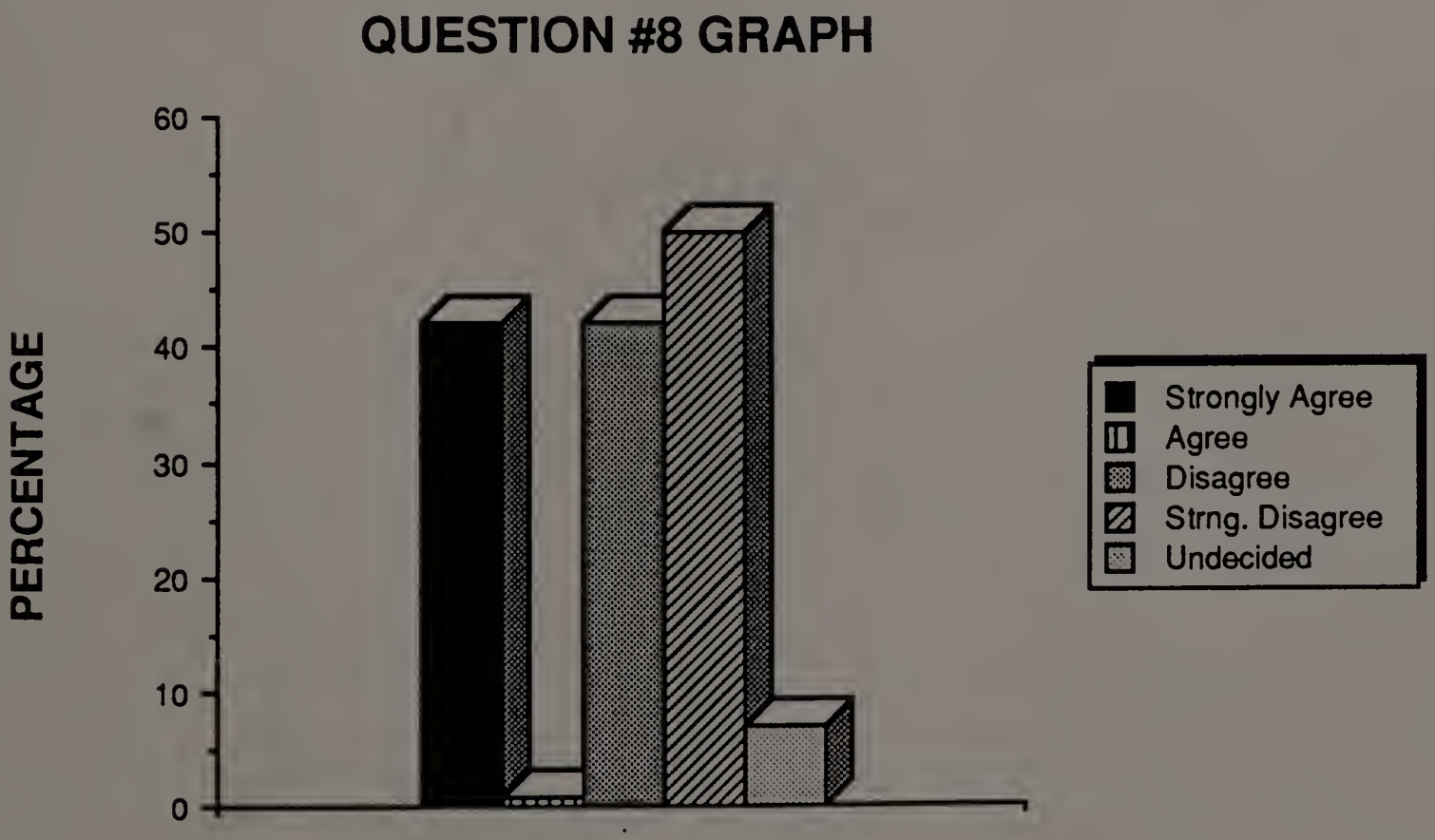
5. Financial advantage of mainstreaming of handicapped students.



6. I have received support from the state of Mass. for my efforts towards mainstreaming.

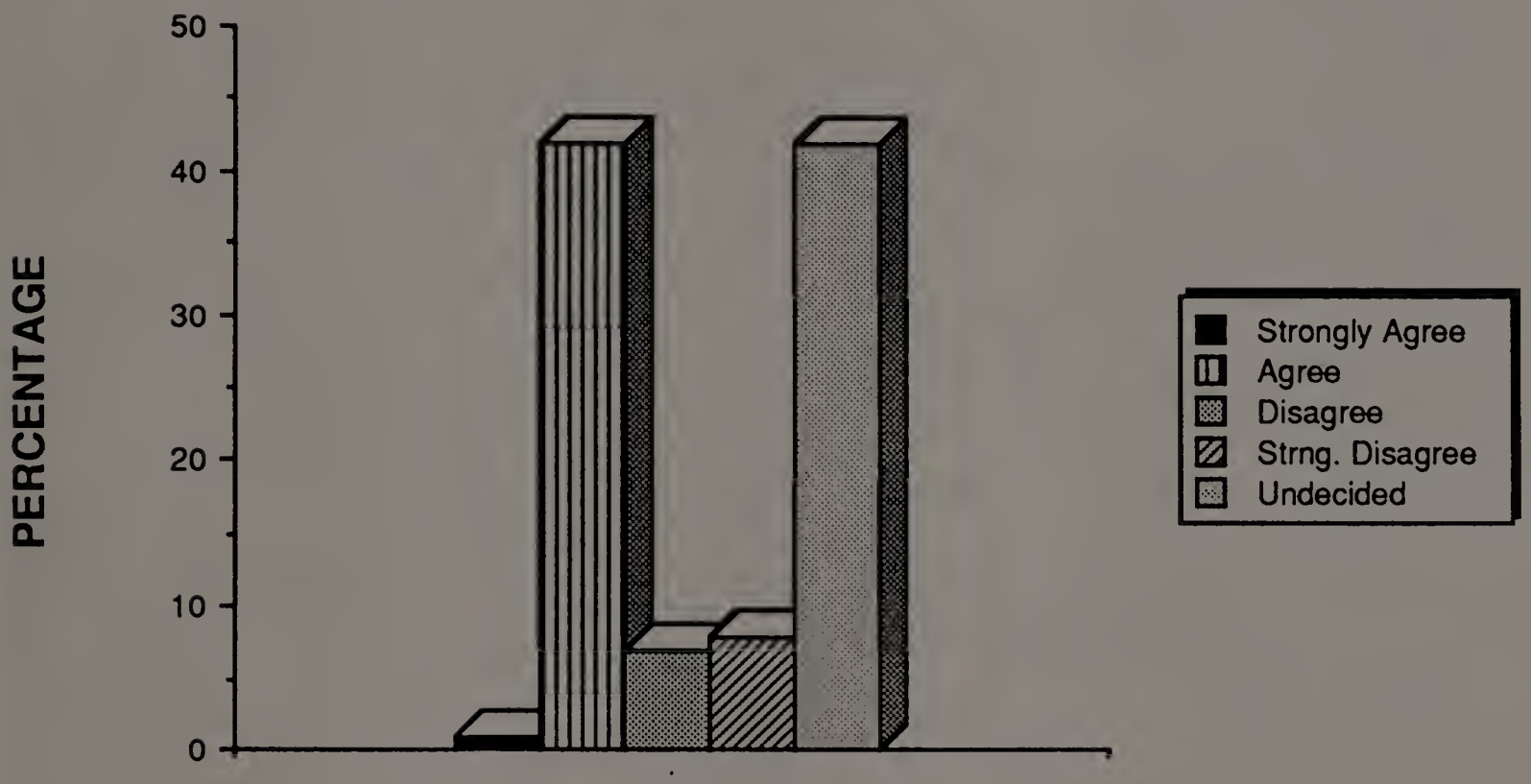


7. I have had difficulty in regard to the recruiting of skilled and licensed professionals.



8. Staff trainning for mildly handicapped and non handicapped students.

QUESTION #9 GRAPH



9. Teachers were supportive in implementing mainstreaming of students during the first year.

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